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# WILSON'S

# TALES OF THE BORDERS

## AND OF SCOTLAND:

## Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative.

*WITH A GLOSSARY.*

Revised by

ALEXANDER LEIGHTON,

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

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# WILSON'S

# TALES OF THE BORDERS

## AND OF SCOTLAND.

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## THE WIDOW OF DUNSKAITH.

"Oh, mony a shriek, that waefu' night,
Rose frae the stormy main;
An' mony a bootless vow was made,
An' mony a prayer vain;
An' mithers wept, an' widows mourned
For mony a weary day;
An' maidens, ance o' blithest mood,
Grew sad, and pined away."

The northern Sutor of Cromarty is of a bolder character than even the southern one—abrupt, and stern, and precipitous as that is. It presents a loftier and more unbroken wall of rock; and, where it bounds on the Moray Frith, there is a savage magnificence in its cliffs and caves, and in the wild solitude of its beach, which we find nowhere equalled on the shores of the other. It is more exposed, too, in the time of tempest: the waves often rise, during the storms of winter, more than a hundred feet against its precipices, festooning them, even at that height, with wreaths of kelp and tangle; and, for miles within the bay, we may hear, at such seasons, the savage uproar that maddens amid its cliffs and caverns, coming booming over the lashings of the nearer waves, like the roar of artillery. There is a sublimity of desolation on its shores, the effects of a conflict maintained for ages, and on a scale so gigantic. The isolated, spire-like crags that rise along its base, are so

drilled and bored by the incessant lashings of the surf, and are ground down into shapes so fantastic, that they seem but the wasted skeletons of their former selves; and we find almost every natural fissure in the solid rock hollowed into an immense cavern, whose very ceiling, though the head turns as we look up to it, owes evidently its comparative smoothness to the action of the waves. One of the most remarkable of these recesses occupies what we may term the apex of a lofty promontory. The entrance, unlike that of most of the others, is narrow and rugged, though of great height; but it widens within into a shadowy chamber, perplexed, like the nave of a cathedral, by uncertain cross lights, that come glimmering into it through two lesser openings, which perforate the opposite sides of the promontory. It is a strange, ghostly-looking place: there is a sort of moonlight greenness in the twilight which forms its noon, and the denser shadows which rest along its sides; a blackness, so profound that it mocks the eye, hangs over a lofty passage which leads from it, like a corridor, still deeper into the bowels of the hill; the light falls on a sprinkling of half-buried bones, the remains of animals that, in the depth of winter, have creeped into it for shelter, and to die; and, when the winds are up, and the hoarse roar of the waves comes reverberated from its inner recesses, or creeps howling along its roof, it needs no over-active fancy to people its avenues with the shapes of beings long since departed from every gayer and softer scene, but which still rise uncalled to the imagination in those by-corners of nature which seem dedicated, like this cavern, to the wild, the desolate, and the solitary.

There is a little rocky bay a few hundred yards to the west, which has been known for ages, to all the seafaring men of the place, as the Cova Green. It is such a place as we are sometimes made acquainted with in the narratives of disastrous shipwrecks. First, there is a broad semicir-

cular strip of beach, with a wilderness of insulated piles of rock in front; and so steep and continuous is the wall of precipices which rises behind, that, though we may see directly over head the grassy slopes of the hill, with here and there a few straggling firs, no human foot ever gained the nearer edge. The bay of the Cova Green is a prison to which the sea presents the only outlet; and the numerous caves which open along its sides, like the arches of an amphitheatre, seem but its darker cells. It is, in truth, a wild impressive place, full of beauty and terror, and with none of the squalidness of the mere dungeon about it. There is a puny littleness in our brick and lime receptacles of misery and languor which speaks as audibly of the feebleness of man, as of his crimes or his inhumanity; but here all is great and magnificent—and there is much, too, that is pleasing. Many of the higher cliffs, which rise beyond the influence of the spray, are tapestried with ivy; we may see the heron watching on the ledges beside her bundle of withered twigs, or the blue hawk darting from her cell; there is life on every side of us—life in even the wild tumbling of the waves, and in the stream of pure water which, rushing from the higher edge of the precipice in a long white cord, gradually untwists itself by the way, and spatters ceaselessly among the stones over the entrance of one of the caves. Nor does the scene want its old story to strengthen its hold on the imagination.

I am wretchedly uncertain in my dates, but it must have been some time late in the reign of Queen Anne, that a fishing yawl, after vainly labouring for hours to enter the bay of Cromarty, during a strong gale from the west, was forced, at nightfall, to relinquish the attempt, and take shelter in the Cova Green. The crew consisted of but two persons—an old fisherman and his son. Both had been throroughly drenched by the spray, and chilled by the piercing wind, which, accompanied by thick snow showers,

had blown all day through the opening, from off the snowy top of Ben Wyvis; and it was with no ordinary satisfaction that, as they opened the little bay on their last tack, they saw the red gleam of a fire flickering from one of the caves, and a boat drawn upon the beach.

"It must be some of the Tarbet fishermen," said the old man, "wind-bound like ourselves; but wiser than us, in having made provision for it. I shall feel willing enough to share their fire with them for the night."

"But see," remarked the younger, "that there be no unwillingness on the other side. I am much mistaken if that be not the boat of my cousins the Macinlas, who would so fain have broken my head last Rhorichie Tryst. But, hap what may, father, the night is getting worse, and we have no choice of quarters. Hard up your helm, or we shall barely clear the Skerries; there now, every nail an anchor." He leaped ashore, carrying with him the small hawser attached to the stern, which he wound securely round a jutting crag, and then stood for a few seconds until the old man, who moved but heavily along the thwarts, had come up to him. All was comparatively calm under the lee of the precipices; but the wind was roaring fearfully in the woods above, and whistling amid the furze and ivy of the higher cliff; and the two boatmen, as they entered the cave, could see the flakes of a thick snow shower, that had just begun to descend, circling round and round in the eddy.

The place was occupied by three men, who were sitting beside the fire, on blocks of stone which had been rolled from the beach. Two of them were young, and comparatively commonplace-looking persons; the third was a grey-headed old man, apparently of great muscular strength, though long past his prime, and of a peculiarly sinister cast of countenance. A keg of spirits, which was placed end up in front of them, served as a table; there were little drinking measures of tin on it, and the mask-like,

stolid expressions of the two younger men showed that they had been indulging freely. The elder was apparently sober. They all started to their feet on the entrance of the fishermen, and one of the younger, laying hold of the little cask, pitched it hurriedly into a dark corner of the cave."

"His peace be here!" was the simple greeting of the elder fisherman, as he came forward. "Eachen Macinla," he continued, addressing the old man, "we have not met for years before—not, I believe, since the death o' my puir sister, when we parted such ill friends; but we are short-lived creatures ourselves, Eachen—surely our anger should be short-lived too; and I have come to crave from you a seat by your fire."

"William Beth," replied Eachen, "it was no wish of mine we should ever meet; but to a seat by the fire you are welcome."

Old Macinla and his sons resumed their seats, the two fishermen took their places fronting them, and for some time neither party exchanged a word.

A fire, composed mostly of fragments of wreck and drift-wood, threw up its broad cheerful flame towards the roof; but so spacious was the cavern that, except where here and there a whiter mass of stalactites, or bolder projection of cliff stood out from the darkness, the light seemed lost in it. A dense body of smoke, which stretched its blue level surface from side to side, and concealed the roof, went rolling outwards like an inverted river.

"This is but a gousty lodging-place," remarked the old fisherman, as he looked round him; "but I have seen a worse. I wish the folk at home kent we were half sae snug; and then the fire, too—I have always felt something companionable in a fire, something consolable, as it were; it appears, somehow, as if it were a creature like ourselves, and had life in it." The remark seemed directed to no one in particular, and there was no reply. In a second

attempt at conversation, the fisherman addressed himself to the old man.

"It has vexed me," he said, "that our young folk shouldna, for my sister's sake, be on more friendly terms, Eachen. They hae been quarrelling, an' I wish to see the quarrel made up." The old man, without deigning a reply, knit his grey shaggy brows, and looked doggedly at the fire.

"Nay, now," continued the fisherman, "we are getting auld men, Eachen, an' wauld better bury our hard thoughts o' ane anither afore we come to be buried ourselves. What if we were sent to the Cova Green the night, just that we might part friends!"

Eachen fixed his keen scrutinizing glance on the speaker —it was but for a moment; there was a tremulous motion of the under lip as he withdrew it, and a setting of the teeth—the expression of mingled hatred and anger; but the tone of his reply savoured more of sullen indifference than of passion.

"William Beth," he said, "ye hae tricked my boys out o' the bit property that suld hae come to them by their mother; it's no lang since they barely escaped being murdered by your son. What more want you? But ye perhaps think it better that the time should be passed in making hollow lip professions o' good will, than that it suld be employed in clearing off an old score."

"Ay," hiccuped out the elder of the two sons, "the houses might come my way, then; an', besides, gin Helen Henry were to lose her ae joe, the ither might hae a better chance. Rise, brither—rise, man, an' fight for me an' your sweetheart." The younger lad, who seemed verging towards the last stage of intoxication, struck his clenched fist against his palm, and attempted to rise.

"Look ye, uncle," exclaimed the younger fisherman, a powerful-looking and very handsome stripling, as he sprang

to his feet, "your threat might be spared. Our little property was my grandfather's, and naturally descended to his only son; and, as for the affair at Rhorichie, I dare either of my cousins to say the quarrel was of my seeking. I have no wish to raise my hand against the sons or the husband of my aunt; but, if forced to it, you will find that neither my father nor myself are wholly at your mercy."

"Whisht, Earnest," said the old fisherman, laying his hand on the hand of the young man; "sit down—your uncle maun hae ither thoughts. It is now fifteen years, Eachen," he continued, "since I was called to my sister's deathbed. You yourself canna forget what passed there. There had been grief, an' cauld, an' hunger, beside that bed. I'll no say you were willingly unkind—few folk are that but when they hae some purpose to serve by it, an' you could have none; but you laid no restraint on a harsh temper, and none on a craving habit that forgets everything but itsel; and so my puir sister perished in the middle o' her days—a wasted, heart-broken thing. It's no that I wish to hurt you. I mind how we passed our youth thegither, among the wild Buccaneers; it was a bad school, Eachen; an' I owre often feel I havena unlearned a' my ain lessons, to wonder that you shouldna hae unlearned a' yours. But we're getting old men, Eachen, an' we have now what we hadna in our young days, the advantage o' the light. Dinna let us die fools in the sight o' Him who is so willing to give us wisdom—dinna let us die enemies. We have been early friends, though maybe no for good; we have fought afore now at the same gun; we have been united by the luve o' her that's now in the dust; an' there are our boys—the nearest o' kin to ane anither that death has spared. But, what I feel as strongly as a' the rest, Eachen—we hae done meikle ill thegither. I can hardly think o' a past sin without thinking o' you, an'

thinking too, that, if a creature like me may hope he has found pardon, you shouldna despair. Eachen, we maun be friends."

The features of the stern old man relaxed. "You are perhaps right, William," he at length replied; "but ye were aye a luckier man than me—luckier for this world, I'm sure, an' maybe for the next. I had aye to seek, an' often without finding, the good that came in your gate o' itsel. Now that age is coming upon us, ye get a snug rental frae the little houses, an' I hae nacthing; an' ye hae character an' credit, but wha would trust me, or cares for me? Ye hae been made an elder o' the kirk, too, I hear, an' I am still a reprobate; but we were a' born to be just what we are, an' sae maun submit. An' your son, too, shares in your luck; he has heart an' hand, an' my whelps hae neither; an' the girl Henry, that scouts that sot there, likes him—but what wonder o' that? But you are right, William—we maun be friends. Pledge me." The little cask was produced; and, filling the measures, he nodded to Earnest and his father. They pledged him; when, as if seized by a sudden frenzy, he filled his measure thrice in hasty succession, draining it each time to the bottom, and then flung it down with a short hoarse laugh. His sons, who would fain have joined with him, he repulsed with a firmness of manner which he had not before exhibited. "No, whelps," he said—"get sober as fast as ye can."

"We had better," whispered Earnest to his father, "not sleep in the cave to-night."

"Let me hear now o' your quarrel, Earnest," said Eachen—"your father was a more prudent man than you; and, however much he wronged me, did it without quarrelling."

"The quarrel was none of my seeking," replied Earnest. "I was insulted by your sons, and would have borne it for the sake of what they seemed to forget; but there was

another whom they also insulted, and that I could not bear."

"The girl Henry—and what then?"

"Why, my cousins may tell the rest. They were mean enough to take odds against me; and I just beat the two spiritless fellows that did so."

But why record the quarrels of this unfortunate evening? An hour or two passed away in disagreeable bickerings, during which the patience of even the old fisherman was worn out, and that of Earnest had failed him altogether. They both quitted the cave, boisterous as the night was, and it was now stormier than ever; and, heaving off their boat, till she rode at the full length of her swing from the shore, sheltered themselves under the sail. The Macinlas returned next evening to Tarbet; but, though the wind moderated during the day, the yawl of William Beth did not enter the bay of Cromarty. Weeks passed away, during which the clergyman of the place corresponded, regarding the missing fishermen, with all the lower parts of the Frith; but they had disappeared, as it seemed, for ever.

Where the northern Sutor sinks into the low sandy tract that nearly fronts the town of Cromarty, there is a narrow grassy terrace raised but a few yards over the level of the beach. It is sheltered behind by a steep undulating bank; for, though the rock here and there juts out, it is too rich in vegetation to be termed a precipice. To the east, the coast retires into a semicircular rocky recess, terminating seawards in a lofty, dark-browed precipice, and bristling, throughout all its extent, with a countless multitude of crags, that, at every heave of the wave, break the surface into a thousand eddies. Towards the west, there is a broken and somewhat dreary waste of sand. The terrace itself, however, is a sweet little spot, with its grassy slopes, that recline towards the sun, partially covered with

thickets of wild-rose and honeysuckle, and studded, in their season, with violets, and daisies, and the delicate rock geranium. Towards its eastern extremity, with the bank rising immediately behind, and an open space in front, which seemed to have been cultivated at one time as a garden, there stood a picturesque little cottage. It was that of the widow of William Beth. Five years had now elapsed since the disappearance of her son and husband, and the cottage bore the marks of neglect and decay. The door and window, bleached white by the sea winds, shook loosely to every breeze; clusters of chickweed luxuriated in the hollows of the thatch, or mantled over the eaves; and a honeysuckle that had twisted itself round the chimney, lay withering in a tangled mass at the foot of the wall. But the progress of decay was more marked in the widow herself than in her dwelling. She had had to contend with grief and penury: a grief not the less undermining in its effects, from the circumstance of its being sometimes suspended by hope—a penury so extreme that every succeeding day seemed as if won by some providential interference from absolute want. And she was now, to all appearance, fast sinking in the struggle. The autumn was well nigh over: she had been weak and ailing for months before, and had now become so feeble as to be confined for days together to her bed. But, happily, the poor solitary woman had, at least, one attached friend in the daughter of a farmer of the parish, a young and beautiful girl, who, though naturally of no melancholy temperament, seemed to derive almost all she enjoyed of pleasure from the society of the widow. Helen Henry was in her twenty-third year; but she seemed older in spirit than in years. She was thin and pale, though exquisitely formed; there was a drooping heaviness in her fine eyes, and a cast of pensive thought on her forehead, that spoke of a longer experience of grief than so brief a portion of life might be

supposed to have furnished. She had once lovers; but they had gradually dropped away in the despair of moving her, and awed by a deep and settled pensiveness which, in the gayest season of youth, her character had suddenly but permanently assumed. Besides, they all knew her affections were already engaged, and had come to learn, though late and unwillingly, that there are cases in which no rival can be more formidable than a dead one.

Autumn, I have said, was near its close. The weather had given indications of an early and severe winter; and the widow, whose worn-out and delicate frame was affected by every change of atmosphere, had for a few days been more than usually indisposed. It was now long past noon, and she had but just risen. The apartment, however, bore witness that her young friend had paid her the accustomed morning visit; the fire was blazing on a clean comfortable-looking hearth, and every little piece of furniture it contained was arranged with the most scrupulous care. Her devotions were hardly over, when the well-known tap was again heard at the door.

"Come in, my lassie," said the widow, and then lowering her voice, as the light foot of her friend was heard on the threshold—"God," she said, "has been ever kind to me—far, very far aboon my best deservings; and, oh, may He bless and reward her who has done so meikle, meikle for me!" The young girl entered and took her seat beside her.

"You told me, mother," she said, "that to-morrow is Earnest's birthday. I have been thinking of it all last night, and feel as if my heart were turning into stone. But when I am alone, it is always so. There is a cold death-like weight at my breast that makes me unhappy, though, when I come to you, and we speak together, the feeling passes away, and I become cheerful."

"Ah, my bairn," replied the old woman; "I fear I'm no

your friend, meikle as I love you. We speak owre, owre often o' the lost; for our foolish hearts find mair pleasure in that than in anything else; but ill does it fit us for being alone. Weel do I ken your feeling—a stone deadness o' the heart, a feeling there are no words to express, but that seems as it were insensibility itself turning into pain; an' I ken, too, my lassie, that it is nursed by the very means ye take to flee from it. Ye maun learn to think mair o' the living and less o' the dead. Little, little does it matter, how a puir worn-out creature like me passes the few broken days o' life that remains to her; but ye are young, my Helen, an' the world is a' before you; an' ye maun just try an' live for it."

"To-morrow," rejoined Helen, "is Earnest's birthday. Is it no strange that, when our minds make pictures o' the dead, it is always as they looked best, an' kindest, an' maist life-like. I have been seeing Earnest all night long, as when I saw him on his *last* birthday; an', oh, the sharpness o' the pang, when, every now an' then, the back o' the picture is turned to me, an' I see him as he is—dust!"

The widow grasped her young friend by the hand. "Helen," she said, "you will get better when I am taken from you; but, so long as we continue to meet, our thoughts will aye be running the one way. I had a strange dream last night, an' must tell it you. You see yon rock to the east, in the middle o' the little bay, that now rises through the back draught o' the sea, like the hull o' a ship, an' is now buried in a mountain o' foam. I dreamed I was sitting on that rock, in what seemed a bonny summer's morning; the sun was glancin' on the water; an' I could see the white sand far down at the bottom, wi' the reflection o' the little wavies running o'er it in long curls o' gowd. But there was no way o' leaving the rock, for the deep waters were round an' round me; an' I saw the tide covering one wee bittie after another, till at last the whole was

covered. An' yet I had but little fear; for I remembered that baith Earnest an' William were in the sea afore me; an' I had the feeling that I could hae rest nowhere but wi' them. The water at last closed o'er me, an' I sank frae aff the rock to the sand at the bottom. But death seemed to have no power given him to hurt me; an' I walked as light as ever I hae done on a gowany brae, through the green depths o' the sea. 'I saw the silvery glitter o' the trout an' the salmon, shining to the sun, far far aboon me, like white pigeons in the lift; an' around me there were crimson starfish, an' sea-flowers, an' long trailing plants that waved in the tide like streamers; an' at length I came to a steep rock wi' a little cave like a tomb in it. 'Here,' I said, 'is the end o' my journey—William is here, an' Earnest.' An', as I looked into the cave, I saw there were bones in it, an' I prepared to take my place beside them. But, as I stooped to enter, some one called me, an' on looking up, there was William. 'Lillias,' he said, 'it is not night yet, nor is that your bed; you are to sleep, not with me, but with Earnest—haste you home, for he is waiting you.' 'Oh, take me to him! I said; an' then all at once I found myself on the shore, dizzied an' blinded wi' the bright sunshine; for, at the cave, there was a darkness like that o' a simmer's gloamin; an', when I looked up for William, it was Earnest that stood before me, life-like an' handsome as ever; an' you were beside him.'"

The day had been gloomy and lowering, and, though there was little wind, a tremendous sea, that, as the evening advanced, rose higher and higher against the neighbouring precipice, had been rolling ashore since morning. The wind now began to blow in long hollow gusts among the cliffs, and the rain to patter against the widow's casement.

"It will be a storm from the sea," she said; "the scarts an' gulls hae been flying landward sin' daybreak, an' I hae

never seen the ground swell come home heavier against the rocks. Wae's me for the puir sailors!"

"In the lang stormy nights," said Helen, "I canna sleep for thinking o' them, though I have no one to bind me to them now. Only look how the sea rages among the rocks, as if it were a thing o' life an' passion!—that last wave rose to the crane's nest. An', look, yonder is a boat rounding the rock wi' only one man in it. It dances on the surf as if it were a cork, an' the wee bittie o' sail, sae black an' weet, seems scarcely bigger than a napkin. Is it no bearing in for the boat haven below?"

"My poor old eyes," replied the widow, "are growing dim, an' surely no wonder; but yet I think I should ken that boatman. Is it no Eachen Macinla o' Tarbet?"

"Hard-hearted, cruel old man," exclaimed the maiden, "what can be taking him here? Look how his skiff shoots in like an arrow on the long roll o' the surf!—an' now she is high on the beach. How unfeeling it was o' him to rob you o' your little property in the very first o' your grief! But, see, he is so worn out that he can hardly walk over the rough stones. Ah, me, he is down! wretched old man I must run to his assistance—but no, he has risen again. See he is coming straight to the house; an' now he is at the door." In a moment after, Eachen entered the cottage.

"I am perishing, Lillias," he said, "with cold an' hunger, an' can gang nae farther; surely ye'll no shut your door on me in a night like this."

The poor widow had been taught in a far different school. She relinquished to the worn-out fisherman her seat by the fire, now hurriedly heaped with fresh fuel, and hastened to set before him the simple viands which her cottage afforded.

As the night darkened, the storm increased. The wind roared among the rocks like the rattling of a thousand carriages over a paved street; and there were times when,

after a sudden pause, the blast struck the cottage, as if it were a huge missile flung against it, and pressed on its roof and walls till the very floor rocked, and the rafters strained and shivered like the beams of a stranded vessel. There was a ceaseless patter of mingled rain and snow—now lower, now louder; and the fearful thunderings of the waves, as they raged among the pointed crags, was mingled with the hoarse roll of the storm along the beach. The old man sat beside the fire, fronting the widow and her companion, with his head reclined nearly as low as his knee, and his hands covering his face. There was no attempt at conversation. He seemed to shudder every time the blast yelled along the roof; and, as a fiercer gust burst open the door, there was a half-muttered ejaculation.

"Heaven itsel hae mercy on them! for what can man do in a night like this?"

"It is black as pitch," exclaimed Helen, who had risen to draw the bolt; "an' the drift flies sae thick that it feels to the hand like a solid snaw wreath. An', oh, how it lightens?"

"Heaven itsel hae mercy on them!" again ejaculated the old man. "My two boys," said he, addressing the widow, "are at the far Frith; an' how can an open boat live in a night like this?"

There seemed something magical in the communication —something that awakened all the sympathies of the poor bereaved woman; and she felt she could forgive him every unkindness.

"Wae's me!" she exclaimed, "it was in such a night as this, an' scarcely sae wild, that my Earnest perished."

The old man groaned and wrung his hands.

In one of the pauses of the hurricane, there was a gun heard from the sea, and shortly after a second. "Some puir vessel in distress," said the widow; but, alas! where can succour come frae in sae terrible a night? There is

help only in Ane. Wae's me! would we no better light up a blaze on the floor, an', dearest Helen, draw off the cover frae the window. My puir Earnest has told me that my light has aften shewed him his bearing frae the deadly bed o' Dunskaith. That last gun"—for a third was now heard booming over the mingled roar of the sea and the wind—"that last gun came frae the very rock edge. Wae's me, wae's me! maun they perish, an' sae near!" Helen hastily lighted a bundle of more fir, that threw up its red, sputtering blaze half-way to the roof, and, dropping the covering, continued to wave it opposite the window. Guns were still heard at measured intervals, but apparently from a safer offing; and the last, as it sounded faintly against the wind, came evidently from the interior of the bay.

"She has escaped," said the old man; "it's a feeble hand that canna do good when the heart is willing—but what has mine been doing a' life long?" He looked at the widow and shuddered.

Towards morning, the wind fell, and the moon, in her last quarter, rose red and glaring out of the Frith, lighting the melancholy roll of the waves, that still came like mountains, and the broad white belt of surf that skirted the shores. The old fisherman left the cottage, and sauntered along the beach. It was heaped with huge wreaths of kelp and tangle uprooted by the storm, and in the hollow of the rocky bay lay the scattered fragments of a boat. Eachen stooped to pick up a piece of the wreck, in the fearful expectation of finding some known mark by which to recognise it, when the light fell full on the swollen face of a corpse that seemed staring at him from out a wreath of weed. It was that of his eldest son. The body of the younger, fearfully gashed and mangled by the rocks, lay a few yards farther to the east.

The morning was as pleasant as the night had been boisterous; and, except that the distant hills were covered

with snow, and that a heavy swell still continued to roll in from the sea, there remained scarce any trace of the recent tempest. Every hollow of the neighbouring hill had its little runnel, formed by the rains of the previous night, that now splashed and glistened to the sun. The bushes round the cottage were well nigh divested of their leaves; but their red berries—hips and haws, and the juicy fruit of the honeysuckle—gleamed cheerfully to the light; and a warm steam of vapour, like that of a May morning, rose from the roof and the little mossy platform in front. But the scene seemed to have something more than merely its beauty to recommend it to a young man, drawn apparently to the spot, with many others, by the fate of the two unfortunate fishermen, and who now stood gazing on the rocks, and the hills, and the cottage, as a lover on the features of his mistress. The bodies had been carried to an old storehouse, which may still be seen a short mile to the west; and the crowds that, during the early part of the morning, had been perambulating the beach, gazing at the wreck, and discussing the various probabilities of the accident, had gradually dispersed. But this solitary individual, whom no one knew, remained behind. He was a tall and swarthy, though very handsome man, of about five-and-twenty, with a slight scar on his left cheek; his dress, which was plain and neat, was distinguished from that of the common seaman by three narrow stripes of gold lace on the upper part of one of the sleeves. He had twice stepped towards the cottage door, and twice drawn back, as if influenced by some unaccountable feeling—timidity, perhaps, or bashfulness; and yet the bearing of the man gave little indication of either. But, at length, as if he had gathered heart, he raised the latch and went in.

The widow, who had had many visitors that morning, seemed to be scarcely aware of his entrance; she was sitting on a low seat beside the fire, her face covered with

her hands, while the tremulous rocking motion of her body showed that she was still brooding over the distresses of the previous night. Her companion, who had thrown herself across the bed, was fast asleep. The stranger seated himself beside the fire, which seemed dying amid its ashes, and, turning sedulously from the light of the window, laid his hand gently on the widow's shoulder. She started, and looked up.

"I have strange news for you," he said. "You have long mourned for your husband and your son; but, though the old man has been dead for years, your son, Earnest, is still alive, and is now in the harbour of Cromarty. He is lieutenant of the vessel whose guns you must have heard during the night."

The poor woman seemed to have lost all power of reply.

"I am a friend of Earnest's," continued the stranger; "and have come to prepare you for meeting with him. It is now five years since his father and he were blown off to sea by a strong gale from the land. They drove before it for four days, when they were picked up by an armed vessel then cruising in the North Sea, and which soon after sailed for the coast of Spanish America. The poor old man sank under the fatigues he had undergone; though Earnest, better able from his youth to endure hardship, was little affected by them. He accompanied us on our Spanish expedition—indeed, he had no choice, for we touched at no British port after meeting with him; and, through good fortune, and what his companions call merit, he has risen to be the second man aboard; and has now brought home with him gold enough, from the Spaniards, to make his old mother comfortable. He saw your light yesterevening, and steered by it to the road-stead, blessing you all the way. Tell me, for he anxiously wished me to inquire of you, whether Helen Henry is yet unmarried."

"It is Earnest—it is Earnest himself!" exclaimed the maiden, as she started from the widow's bed. In a moment after she was locked in his arms. But why dwell on a scene which I feel myself unfitted to describe?

It was ill, before evening, with old Eachen Macinla. The fatigues of the previous day, the grief and horror of the following night, had prostrated his energies, bodily and mental, and he now lay tossing, in a waste apartment of the storehouse, in the delirium of a fever. The bodies of his two sons occupied the floor below. He muttered, unceasingly, in his ravings, of William and Earnest Beth. They were standing beside him, he said, and every time he attempted to pray for his poor boys and himself, the stern old man laid his cold swollen hand on his lips.

"Why trouble me?" he exclaimed. "Why stare with your white dead eyes on me? Away, old man! the little black shells are sticking in your gray hairs; away to your place! Was it I who raised the wind on the sea?—was it I?—was it I? Uh, u!—no—no, you were asleep—you were fast asleep, and could not see me cut the swing; and, besides, it was only a piece of rope. Keep away—touch me not; I am a free man, and will plead for my life. Please your honour, I did not murder these two men; I only cut the rope that fastened their boat to the land. Ha! ha! ha! he has ordered them away, and they have both left me unskaithed." At this moment Earnest Beth entered the apartment, and approached the bed. The miserable old man raised himself on his elbow, and, regarding him with a horrid stare, shrieked out—"Here is Earnest Beth come for me a second time!" and, sinking back on the pillow, instantly expired.

## THE WHITSOME TRAGEDY.

When our forefathers were compelled to give up the ancient practice of crossing the Borders, and of seizing and driving home whatever cattle they could lay their hands upon, without caring or inquiring who might be their owner—in order to supply their necessities, both as regarded providing themselves with cattle and with articles of wearing apparel, they were forced to become buyers or sellers at the annual and other fairs on both sides of the Border. Hence they had, as we still have, the fairs of Stagshawbank, Whitsunbank, St. Ninian's, St. James's, and St. Boswell's; with the fairs of Wooler, Dunse, Chirnside, Swinton, and of many other towns and villages. Of the latter, several fell into disuse; and that of Whitsome was discontinued. Whitsome, or White's home, is the name of a village and small agricultural parish in the Merse, which is bounded by the parishes of Swinton, Ladykirk, Edrom, and Hutton. Now, as has been stated, Whitsome, in common with many other villages, enjoyed the privilege of having held at it an annual fair. But, though the old practice of lifting cattle, and of every man taking what he could, had been suppressed, the laws were not able to extinguish the ancient Border spirit which produced such doings; and, at the annual fairs, it often broke forth in riot, and terminated in blood. It was in consequence of one of those scenes, and in order to suppress them, that the people of Whitsome were deprived of a fair being held there; the particulars whereof, in the following story, will be unfolded.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, there

resided on the banks of the Till, and a few miles above its junction with the Tweed, a widow of the name of Barbara Moor. She had had seven sons; but they and her husband had all fallen in the troubles of the period, and she was left bereaved, desolate, and without a comforter. Many said that affliction had turned her brain; but even before she was acquainted with days of sorrow or with nights of lamentation, there was often a burning wildness in her words, and her manners were not as those of other women. There was a tinge of extravagance, and a character of vehemence, in all her actions. Some of her neighbours sympathised with her, because of the affliction that rendered her hearth desolate; but the greater part beheld her with reverential respect, or looked upon her with fear and trembling, believing her to be leagued with the inhabitants of the invisible world, and familiar with the moon and stars, reading in their courses the destinies of nations and of individuals as in a book. The character of a being who could read the decrees of fate, and even in some instances control the purposes of men, was certainly that which she seemed most pleased to assume; and its wildness soothed her troubled thoughts, or directed them into other channels.

In her youth, and before her father had been compelled to bow his head to the authority of the wardens of the marches, she had resided in a castellated building, of greater strength than magnitude, one of the minor strongholds on the Border, and which might have been termed towers for the protection of stolen cattle. But, when the two nations came beneath the sovereignty of one monarch, and the spear of war was transformed into a pruning-hook, there went forth a decree that the strongholds, great and small, along the Borders should be destroyed; and amongst those that were rendered defenceless and uninhabitable was the turret which, for many generations,

had been occupied by the ancestors of Barbara Moor During the life-time of her husband, she had resided in a comfortable-looking farm-house, the appearance of which indicated that its inhabitants were of a more peaceful character than were those who, a few years before, had occupied the prison-like houses of strength. She now resided in a small mud-built and turf-covered hovel, which in winter afforded but a sorry shelter from the "pelting of the pitiless storm."

But Barbara was used to bear the scorching sun of summer and the cold and storms of winter. She walked in the midst of the tempest, and bowed not her head; and she held converse with the wild lightning and the fierce hail, speaking of them as the ministers of her will. For nearly nine months every year she was absent from her clay-built hovel, and none knew whither she wandered.

It is necessary, however, for the development of our story, that we here make further mention of her husband and her sons. The elder Moor had been a daring free-booter in his youth; and often in the morning, and even at dead of night, the "fray of support," the cry for help, and the sudden summons for neighbours and kinsmen to rise and ride, were raised wheresoever he trode; and the sleuth-hounds were let loose upon his track. It was his boast that he dared to ride farther to humble an enemy than any other reiver on either side of the Border. If he saw, or if he heard, of a herd of cattle or a flock of sheep to his liking, he immediately "marked it for his own," and seldom failed in securing it; and though the property so obtained was not purchased with money, it was often procured with a part of his own blood—and with the blood, and not unfrequently the lives, of his friends, followers, and relatives. And when law and justice became stronger than the reiver's right, they by no means tamed

his spirit. Though necessity, then, compelled him to be a buyer and seller of cattle, he looked upon the occupation and the necessity as a disgrace, and he sighed for the honoured and happier days of his youth, when the freebooter's might was the freebooter's right. His sons were young men deeply imbued with his spirit; and it was their chiefest pleasure, during the long winter evenings, to sit and listen to him, while he recorded the exploits and the hairbreadth escapes of his early days. He frequently related to them strange adventures and contests which he had in his youth with one Walter Cunningham, who resided near Simprin, in Berwickshire, and who was not only regarded as a wealthy man, but as one of the boldest on the Borders. He had often boasted of the number of his herds, and defied the stoutest heart in Northumberland to lay hand upon their horns. The elder Moor had heard this defiance, and being resolved to prove that he had both a hand and a heart to put the defiance to the test, the following is one of the adventures which he related to his sons in connection therewith :—

"It was about the Martinmas," he said, "when the leaves were becoming few and blighted on the trees; I was courting your mother at the time, and her faither had consented to our marriage; but, at the same time, he half cast up to me, that I had but an ill-plenished house to take home a wife to—that I had neither meal in the press, kye in the byre, nor oxen in the court-yard. His own mailing was but poorly provided at the time; and had he looked at hame, he hardly would have ventured to throw a reflection at me.

"'Weel, sir, said I to him, 'I dinna deny but what you say is true; but I have supple heels, a ready hand, a good sword, and a stout heart, and I ken a canny byre where there are threescore o' sleak beasties, weel worth the harrying.'

"'Now ye speak like a lad of sense and mettle,' said the

old man; 'and on the first night that ye bring them hame, the plumpest and the fattest o' them shall be slaughtered for the marriage-feast of you and Barbara.'

"Then up spoke your mother's brother, and a winsome young man he was as ye would have found between Tweed and Tyne; and 'Jonathan,' says he to me, 'when ye gang to drive hame the herd, I shall go wi' thee, for the sake of a bout with the bold, bragging Cunningham, of Simprin—for I will lay thee my sword 'gainst a tailor's bodkin, it is him ye mean.'

"'It is him, Duncan,' said I—for your uncle's name was Duncan—'though weel do I ken that he keeps them strongly guarded, and blood will flow, and weapons be broken, before we get them into our possession. But gie me your hand, my lad—we two shall be a match for him and a' his backing. What ye take shall be your own, and what I take, your sister's; and your faither shanna cast up my toom bink and my ill-stocked mailing.'

"'Weel spoken, bairns!' cried your grandfaither, who had been a first hand at such ploys in his young days; 'weel spoken! I'm glad to see that the spirits of the young generation arena gaun backward; though, since King Jamie gaed to be King in London, as weel as at Edinburgh, our laws are only fit for a few women, and everything is done that can be done to banish manhood, and make it a crime.'

"'Go upon no such an errand,' said your mother to both of us; 'for there is blood upon baith your brows, and there is death in your path.'

"'Havers, lassie!' cried her faither angrily; 'are ye at your randering again?—what blood do ye see on their brows mair than I do, or what death can ye perceive in their path? All your mother's Highland kinsfolk were never able to throw their second-sighted glamour into my een, and my own bairn shanna do it.'

"'Call it randers, or what ye will,' answered she; 'but I see it plain as I see the grey hairs upon your head, that death and lamentation are gathering round my father's hearth, and are hovering and screaming owre it, like vultures round a desolate place.'

"Her words made my flesh to creep upon my bones; for, both before that, and a hundred times since, I have heard her say dark and strange things, which sooner or later have owre truly come to pass. However, the foray across to Simprin was delayed till after our marriage; and your mother almost persuaded me to give up all thoughts of it, and instead of my former habits of life, to cultivate the bit ground which my forefaithers had held for two hundred years, for the consideration of an armed man's service. But her brother taunted me, and said I was no better than Samson lying wi' his head on the lap of Dalilah, and that I had not only given his sister my heart to keep, but my courage also. A taunt was a thing that I never could endure, and that I never would put up wi' from any man that ever was born—and I hope none of ye ever will, or, as I am your faither! ye should be no longer my sons!

"'Weel, this night be it,' said I to your uncle, 'The Tweed will be fordable at Norham—I will have my shelty and weapons ready precisely at eleven, and get two friends to accompany us that I can trust. Do ye the like, and we shall see whose courage will stand firmest before morning.'

"We gave each other our hands upon it, and said it was a bargain, and immediately set about making preparations for the excursion. Before the appointed hour, he rode up to my door, accompanied by two of his faither's servants; and I with my two friends were in readiness waiting for him. Your mother was very bitter against our purpose, and her words and her warnings made my very heart to shake within my breast. Her eyes flashed, as if they had

been balls of fire, and her very bosom heaved up and down wi' agitation.

"'Husband!—brother!' she cried, 'listen to me, and give up the mad errand on which ye are bent; for the bloodhound is snuffing the air and gnashing its teeth, and the hooded crow clapping its wings for a feast, and the owl has looked east, west, north, and south, from the auld turret—it has screamed wi' joy, and its eyes are fixed on Simprin! Be wise—be warned—or the moon will set and the sun rise upon unburied bones. Cunningham of Simprin is strong and powerful; he is strong wi' men, he is strong wi' money; and his herds and his hirsels are strongly guarded. Again I say to ye, be wise—be warned—desist!—or auld men will tear their grey hairs, and wives mourn; and those only that live by the gibbet, rejoice wi' the bloodhound and bird of prey!'

"Her words made us both uncomfortable; but we had often been engaged in such exploits before the expedition was determined on; and we couldna, in the presence of the four men that we had engaged to accompany us, abandon it. They were fearless and experienced hands at the trade; but the new laws on the Borders had reduced them to great privations, and their teeth were watering for the flesh-pots of bygone days, no matter at what risk they were to be obtained.

"It was a delightful moonlight night—almost as bright as day; the moon's brightness put out the stars, and not aboon a dozen were visible, though there wasna half that number of clouds in the whole heavens, and they were just like white sheets, that spirits might be sleeping on in the air! We proceeded by way of Twisel to Norham, where we crossed the Tweed to Ladykirk; and as at midnight we passed by the auld kirkyard, I believe I actually put my hands to my ears, lest I should hear the howlets flapping their wings and screaming in the belfry, and

turned my face away from it in a sort of apprehension of seeing a spirit, or something waur, upon every grave; for your mother's propheeies were uppermost in my mind, in spite of all that I could say or strive to think. And I believe that your uncle's mind was troubled wi' the same sort of fears or fancies; for we were both silent the greater part of the road, and spoke very little to each other.

"However, just about one o'clock, and when the moon was beginning to edge down upon the Lammermuirs, we arrived at an enclosure, in which Cunningham had sixty head of cattle penned. The six of us had but little difficulty in breaking down the gate that opened to the enclosure; and just as we were beginning to drive out the cattle, a man started up on a sort of tower place that was built upon the wall that surrounded them, and hurled a kind of instrument round his head, that made a noise like a thousand corn-craiks crying together in concert, and trying which would craik loudest and fastest. At the unearthly sound, the cattle also commenced a louting that might easily have been heard at two or three miles off.

"It at once struck me, as the best and wisest step for us to take, that we should put spurs into our horses, and gallop back to Tweedside; for I kenned it would be impossible for us to secure a single cow, surrounded, as we were sure to be in a few minutes, by sixty or a hundred men; and though I was no coward, I was aware that there could be but little bravery in six men attempting to give battle to sixty. But, before I had time to come to a determination, or even to speak, I saw your uncle's pistol flash; and even, I may say, before I heard the report, I perceived the man tumble down headlong from the turret on the wall, among the horns of the cattle.

"'Ye have done wrong in shooting the lad,' said I; 'ye have raised the whole country side; and presently Cunningham and all his host will be at our heels.'

"'No fear,' said he; 'there is small danger of that—a dead tongue tells no tales. And Cunningham and his host, as you term them, may be at our face, but never shall they be at our heels, unless it be marching or fighting against a common enemy.'

"We began, therefore, to drive out the cattle; but scarce had we driven them from the enclosure, and turned their heads towards the Tweed, when we heard the baying of Cunningham's blood-hounds, and the shouts of his people.

"The sounds of their horses' feet became audible, and every moment they gained ground upon us. It was apparent that, if we persisted in keeping possession of the cattle, and attempting to drive them before us, within two minutes, and we would be within swords' length of each other.

"'Brother,' said I to your uncle, as I turned and perceived that the number of our pursuers could not be under thirty, and was conscious that that number would soon be doubled—'Brother,' said I, 'let us spur on our horses, and leave the cattle to cover our retreat. It is no disgrace for six men to flee before sixty.'

"'Be it so,' he said; but it was too late. The cattle, scared by the shouting of our pursuers, the howling of their blood-hounds, and the flashing of their torches (for they had lighted fir branches to pursue us, as the moon was setting), tossed their horns in the air, and ran wildly to and fro; so that the horses, in their turn, were scared to pass through them, and we were so hemmed in between thick woods, that there was no riding round them.

"The followers of Cunningham surrounded us with a wild shout, and a cry for revenge. But we drew close together—we formed ourselves into a little circle—and waiting the attack of our antagonists, we contended with them hand to hand. Ten of them lay writhing on the

earth, or had retired, wounded, from the contest; while our little band remained unwounded, unbroken. For more than a quarter of an hour, we maintained the unequal fight. But victory, on our side, was impossible, and escape all but hopeless. Your uncle was the first of our number that fell. The sword of an enemy had pierced his bosom, and I heard him shout to me, in a voice rendered dismal with agony, never to yield!—to fight to the last! as he lay bleeding on the ground.

"I was then contending, hand to hand, with Cunningham. In our rage, we had closed by the side of each other, and each grasped the other by the throat. He shortened his sword, and, with a triumphant laugh, was lunging it at my side, when, with a sudden and violent effort, I hurled him from the saddle. As he rose, he thrust his sword into the breast of the horse on which I rode, which reared, sprang forward, and fell, and I was thrown upon the ground, in the midst of enemies.

"Two of the four who accompanied us were also wounded, and disabled from continuing the fight; and the other two, upon seeing your uncle and myself upon the ground, surrendered. In my fall, my hand quitted not my sword. I sprang to my feet, and smote around me to the right and to the left, with the fury of a wild beast. My object was to cut my way through my adversaries to the woods. I at length succeeded; but not until I had been thrice wounded. I rushed forward among the trees, until the sound of my pursuers died away; but the moon had gone down, and I knew not in what direction I ran, but pressed onward and onward, until exhausted, through loss of blood, I fell upon the ground. A sleep that was nae sleep came owre me, and a dream that was nae dream stealed owre my senses; while the blood continued oozing from my wounds, and my soul was creeping away. Something was growing owre my faculties, just like the opening of a starry night, as the

gloaming dies away, and star after star peeps out. I at first felt happy; just steeped, as it were, in a sensation of pleasantness; and there were sounds like sweet music in my ears. But the feeling of happiness was changed, I kenned not how, for one of pain—the feeling of pleasantness for one of horror—and the sweet sounds into dismal howls. I started up—I grasped my sword firmer in my hand; but the howls departed not wi' the disturbed sleep from which I had been startled; but they broke upon my ear, louder and nearer—the howls of the savage sleuth-hound, that had been sent to track me. I heard the horrid beast snuff the air, and break into short, hurried, and savage howls of delight, within a few yards of me. I had not strength to fly; and if I had had strength, flight would have been impossible. My pursuers seemed to have lost trace of the animal; for I could neither hear their footsteps nor the sound of their voices. I made no attempt at flight, but stood waiting its approach, with my sword uplifted to smite it. Loss of blood had brought a dimness over my eyes, which, added to the darkness of the wood, made m that I had rather to grope and listen for the animal, than perceive it, as it might attempt to spring upon me. I would rather have met ten enemies than, in darkness, and in my then fainting state, have waited the attack of that savage beast. It sprang upon me—I struck towards it with my sword, and wounded it; but the weapon came in contact with the tangled branches of the underwood, and the force of the blow was broken. In another moment and I felt the paws of the monster upon my breast. I grasped it by the throat, and we fell upon the ground together—my enemy uppermost. Its teeth were in my shoulder. After several vain attempts, I drove my sword through its body. The howls of the fierce beast were terrible. It withdrew its teeth from my shoulder, and struggled to escape; but I still held it by the throat—with the gripe of

death I held it—and still, still strove to pierce it again and again. I held it till it was stiff, cold, and dead!

"Wounded, faint, and weary as I was, I ventured from the woods before morning broke, and crossed the Tweed at Kersfield. The sun rose at the very moment that I turned the corner of the hill which conceals our house from the public road, and revealed to me your mother, sitting on the blue stone at the door, as cold and frozen-like to appearance as if she had sat there the livelong night (as I afterwards understood she had.) Her hands were clasped together, her eyes were raised upward, and her lips were moving, as if she were repeating a prayer, or muttering a charm. When she saw me approaching the door, she rose from the stone, and, striking her hand upon her brow, cried—'Jonathan Moor! ye cruel man! ye disregarder of the warnings of her whose life is as the shadow of your life! said I not that the hound was howling, and the raven was flapping its wings for a feast?—yet ye would not listen to my voice! And my brother!—where is my brother?—the son of my mother—more headstrong and foolish than yoursel'! Ye daurna answer, and ye needna answer. He is dead! The horse of Cunningham have trampled on his body, and he lies unburied.'

"I didna ken how to find words to speak to her, and, indeed, I was hardly able to speak; for the pain and stiffness of my wounds were terrible to endure, and there was a sickness about my heart that made me that I could have been willing to have lain down and died; and even welcomed death, as a weary man would welcome sleep.

"I was almost recovered from my wounds before we were exactly certain as to your uncle's fate; and that was when three out of the four that had accompanied us were permitted by Cunningham to return home, the other having died of his wounds a few days after the unlucky foray. From their account, it appeared that the person shot by

your uncle, while watching the cattle against the inroads of an enemy, was none other than the only brother of Cunningham. He was not aware of his brother's death until after the affray, when he was found lying in the enclosure, into which the cattle were again driven. He was offering a free pardon to all his prisoners, save him by whose hand his brother fell, upon condition that they would betray him, when your uncle, starting up from the uncouth litter of branches, rudely torn from the trees, and upon which he was carried, cried out—'I did it!—my hand brought him down from his watch-box, like a crow from its roost!'

"'To the turret wi' him!' exclaimed Cunningham wildly; 'and fling him from its pinnacle to the yard below.'

"The fierce command was fiercely and willingly obeyed. Your uncle was borne to the top of the tower over the wall, and hurled headlong to the ground; and he lay there, with the cattle trampling upon him, and the dogs licking his sores, until he was dead.

"Your mother heard the tidings in silence; but, from that day until this, she has never been as she used to be. Her anger is awful in a woman; and she vows and says the day will come when she will have revenge upon the name of Cunningham. She has spoken little of her gift of second-sight since ye were born; but she is often subject to long and gloomy fits of silent melancholy, as ye have all been witnesses; and I attribute it all to our foray to Simprin. But" (the old man would add in conclusion), "would that the good old times were come back again, when I could meet Cunningham in the field; and he should find the hand that unhorsed him five and twenty years syne has lost but little of its strength."

Now, the eldest sons of Jonathan and Barbara Moor were twins, and the youngest were also twins, and they had no

daughters living. The two eldest were seven and twenty, and the two youngest seventeen, when the civil war between the King and the Parliament took place. Walter Cunningham and three sons, with several of his dependants, joined the royal army, and he had but another son, who was then but an infant of a few months old, and whose mother had died ere his infant lips drew from her breast the nourishment of life. That infant he regarded as the Benjamin of his age, and loved him with a double love for his mother's sake. But, deeming that his duty to his King called him to arms, he, with his three eldest sons and followers, took the field, leaving the infant in the charge of a tried nurse.

Now, when Jonathan Moor heard that his old enemy had joined the King's standard, although he was too much of an ancient Borderer to care aught for either one party or another, or for any cause save his own hand; yet, to know that Cunningham had joined the King's party, was enough to induce him to join the army of the Parliament. He knew nothing about the quarrel—and he cared nothing; neither did he understand anything of the religious disputes of the period; for, generally speaking, religion upon the Borders in those days was at a very low ebb. In Berwick, and other places, John Knox, the dauntless apostle of the north, with others of his followers, had laboured some years before; but their success was not great; the Borderers could not be made to understand why they should not "take who had the power," even though kings and wardens issued laws, and clergymen denounced judgments against the practice. It was of no use to tell them "Thou shalt not steal;" the difficulty was to convince them what was theft. It was, therefore, merely because his former adversary and his sons were in the King's army, that Jonathan Moor, with his sons, joined the army of the Parliament.

Barbara protested bitterly against the departure of her husband and her sons to take part in the wars. "Wherefore, Jonathan," she cried, "wherefore will ye sacrifice yourself, and why will ye gie up my winsome sons to the jaws of death? Is there not enough provided for the eagles' and the ravens' banquet, without their bonny blue een to peck at? Bide at hame, and, with my bairns, plough up the green fields, that the earth may provide us with food, as a fond mother, from its bosom. But go ye to the wars, and your destiny is written—your doom is sealed. The blackness of lonely midnight hangs owre me as my widow's hood, and, like Rachel, I shall be left to weep for my children, for they will not be! Turn again, my husband, and my sons lay down your weapons of war. Hearken unto my voice, and remember that ye never knew one of my words fall to the ground. If ye go now, ye rush upon the swords that are sharpened for your destruction, and ye hasten to fatten the raven and the worm; for the winds shall sing your dirge, as your bonny yellow hair waves to the blast, and the gloaming and the night fling a shroud owre your uncoffined limbs. Ye go, but ye winna return. Ye will see the sun rise, but not set—and these are hard words for a mother to say."

But her husband and her sons were men of war. They loved its tumult and its strife, as a hound loveth the sound that calls it to the chase, or a war-horse the echoes of the bugle; and, though they at times trembled at her wild words, they regarded them not. Taking their route by way of Coldstream, Greenlaw, and Soutra Hill, in order to avoid the army of General Leslie, which then occupied the eastern part of Lammermuir, they descended towards Dunbar, where they enrolled themselves as volunteers in the army of Cromwell. A few days after their arrival, they joined a skirmishing party, and, in a wild glen, near to Spot, they encountered a similar company that had

been sent out by General Leslie. In the latter party, were Walter Cunningham and his three sons, and he, indeed, was their commander.

It was with a look of ruthless delight that Jonathan Moor descried his old enemy at the head of the opposite party; and he said unto his sons—"Yonder is the murderer of your uncle—Cunningham of Simprin, with his three young birkies brawly mounted, and riding sprucely at his back. But, before night, the braw plumes in their beavers shall be trampled on the earth, and the horse will be lame that carries one of them back. Stick ye by my side, and ride ye where I ride; for it will be music to your mother's soul to ken that her brother's death is avenged, and by the hands of her own flesh and blood."

The two parties rode forward and met each other. The Cunninghams and the Moors were face to face. The two fathers sat as if fixed upon their saddles for a few seconds, eyeing each other with looks of deadly hatred and ferocity, and recalling the days and the strife of other years.

Though neither party mustered fifty, the onset was fierce and furious—the struggle long and desperate; and, on each side, more than half their original number lay dead or wounded on the ground. Amongst the former were the seven sons of Jonathan Moor, and the three sons of Walter Cunningham. The old men maintained a desperate combat with each other, apart from the rest, until breathless and exhausted, both for a few minutes paused, each holding the point of his sword towards the other's breast; and they now looked once more in each other's face, and again upon the ground, where they beheld the dead bodies of their sons. Grief seemed to seek expression in redoubled rage—again their swords clashed against each other, and gleamed in the sunbeams, rapid as the fitful lightning. After a long and sore contention, in which both had given and received wounds, they fell upon the ground together;

but Moor received his death-wound on the ground, and he fell to rise no more.

"I die!" he gasped, still grasping his antagonist by the breast—"I die, Cunningham—with my children, whom I have led to death, I die! But, remember, there is one left to avenge our deaths, and she will avenge them seven-fold!"

Thus saying, his head fell back upon the ground, and he spoke not again. Cunningham, disengaging himself from the dead man's grasp, went towards the bodies of his children, and throwing himself upon the earth by their side, he kissed their lifeless eyeballs, and mourned over them. His grief was too intense, and his wounds too severe, to permit him continuing with the army, and he returned to his estate near Simprin, to watch over and protect his infant and only surviving son.

When the tidings were brought to Barbara Moor, that she, in one day, had been bereaved of her husband and seven sons, and that the former had fallen by the hand of Cunningham, the destroyer of her brother, she sat and listened to the bearer of the evil tidings as one deprived of the power of speech and motion. Her cheeks, her eyes, manifested no change; but she sat calm, fixed, and entranced in the apathy of death. Her hands remained folded upon her bosom, and her head moved not. The messenger stood wondering and horror-struck, and twice he repeated his melancholy tale; but the listener took no outward note either of his words or his presence, and he departed, marvelling at the silent sorrow of the widow.

"I knew it, man," she exclaimed, starting from her death-like trance after the messenger had departed—"I knew they would not return to me. I told them, but they believed me not—they would not hearken to my words. Miserable, deserted being that I am! wherefore should I live to mourn with the winter winds, or make a companion of the fearsome echoes that howl in the dark glens? Has

not my husband, and have not my seven winsome sons, than whom there were not in Northumberland seven comelier lads—not to say brothers—oh, have not they, in one day, been snatched away, and swallowed up from me, as a jewel that is flung into the deep sea! But I will live to be avenged of their deaths, and my brother's death; and their destroyer shall not dandle a bairn upon his knee, or kiss its cheek, while mine are *all, all* dead, and in a strange grave, and even wi' no one near to pull up the noxious nettle that may be waving ower their once bonny and snow-white bosoms!"

Thus raved the wretched and childless mother; and from that day she was as one who had no fixed abode or resting-place; but, throughout the greater part of the year, wandered to and fro, no one could tell whither; and when she was found near the scenes of happier years, it was as a lonely dweller in the clay-built hovel of which mention has been made. She was a woman of a strong, perhaps it might be said a strange mind; but her imagination was stronger—it was fevered, and early tinctured with gloomy superstitions, until they became like a portion of her creed and her existence; and her afflictions tended to increase its morbidness.

The life of Walter Cunningham now became wrapt up in that of his only son—the child was ever before his eyes, and he watched over his growth as over a tender plant. His sole "care was to increase his store," and lay up treasure for the child of his age, the youngest and the only survivor of his flock. The number of his flocks and of his herds increased greatly, and he was in the habit of attending the fairs upon the Borders, to dispose of them. It was Whitsome fair; and he sent there many of his cattle and his sheep for sale. He also attended it, and he took with him his son, who was then a boy of from three to four years of age.

It was drawing towards evening, and Mr. Cunningham, in concluding a bargain with a person who had bought a number of his cattle, was separated from his child. He had not been absent from the spot where he had left him for ten minutes; but the child had disappeared; and search was made for him throughout the fair, but he was nowhere to be found, neither could any one give tidings of him. The anxious father sought his lost child from booth to booth; and, with his friends, he also searched the adjoining woods. He called his son by name, till, from far amidst the trees, it was echoed back; but that cheerless echo, or the scream of a startled bird, was the only reply. The disappearance of the child was a mystery which no one could unriddle. His father, during the few minutes that he was to be absent, had left him in charge of a servant, who confessed having entered a drinking booth, and as the liquor went round, he perceived not that the child had left his side. For many days his father sought him sorrowing; but all search proved vain.

Mr. Cunningham returned to his house, a heart-broken and miserable man. The last, the only being that he loved on earth, had disappeared from his fond gaze, even as a beautiful vapour of strange shapes and gorgeous colours, which we gaze upon in the heavens, and turning from it but for a moment, we look for it again—but it is not. He refused to listen to words of consolation, or even of hope; and for several years he left not his house, but sat in loneliness, making a companion of his sorrow.

Now, it was on a dark and dismal winter night, seven years after the disappearance of his son, when the hail rattled fiercely against the narrow casements of his habitation, and the wind howled wildly over the earth, tearing the branches from the naked trees, and causing the cattle to crowd together for shelter—that a wild voice was heard singing a wilder dirge, as if to the measure and music of

the storm. The sound came from an open shed adjoining the house, where the cattle had been placed for shelter.

The servants informed their master that a strange woman, whose wits seemed disordered, had crept into the shed, where, before morning, from the fury of the storm, she would doubtless perish. They took a light, and he accompanied them to the shed.

Before them a wretched being sat upon the straw, and the hail dashed bitterly against her unshrinking, but time-worn and storm-beaten features. Her grey hairs waved loose and wildly in the wind. Her hands were clasped together upon her breast; and, as she sat, she sang the wild and melancholy dirge that has been mentioned. The burden of the strain was "Childless!—childless!—childless!" And again it waxed louder, and a prayer for vengeance was wildly sung. She sat and continued her dirge, regardless of their presence, and appeared as though she saw them not. The tears gathered in the eyes of Mr. Cunningham, as he listened to her dark words, and his limbs shook with a trembling motion.

"Take her into the house," said he, "and give her food and shelter for the night. If my poor boy yet live, he may be now perishing, with none to shelter him."

At his mention of his lost son, her wild strain suddenly ceased. She started to her feet; and, as she fixed upon him her haggard features, while her grey hairs and the many-coloured rags that covered her waved in the stormy wind, she seemed as though she were not an inhabitant of the earth, but rather the demon of the storm.

"Ha! ha! ha!" she cried, with a hideous laugh, that made the beholders and the hearers shudder; "shelter from you!—the murderer of my brother!—of my husband!—of my children!—of my seven fair sons!—you that have made me childless! Back to thy dwelling, dog; and, if it will add another drop of torturing anxiety to your soul, to

know that your son lives, and that you shall see him, but never know him—learn that he does live! He lives!"

"Where, woman?—where?" exclaimed the wretched father.

She hastily dashed a sort of lantern from the hand of the servant who held it, and, rushing from the shed towards the open fields, again laughed more dismally than before, and cried, "Where? She whom you have made childless, leaves that *where* to torture you for ever!"

The wretched father rushed after her; but, in the darkness, the noise, and tempest of the night, it was impossible to trace in what direction she had fled. As every reader must be already aware, the strange and fearful-looking woman was Barbara Moor, the widowed and childless mother. The words which she had spoken, regarding his son being yet alive, increased the anxious misery of Walter Cunningham. It caused his wounds, the anguish of which time had in some degree abated, to bleed afresh. At one time he doubted, and at another he believed, the words which the seeming maniac had uttered; and he made journeys to many places, in the hope of again meeting her, and of extorting from her a confession where he should find his son, or of obtaining some information that might throw light upon his fate. But his journeys then were as fruitless as his former inquiries.

We must here introduce another character to our readers, in the person of Sandy Reed. At the period at which we introduce him, he was a widower, between forty and fifty years of age, with an only daughter, named Anne, a child of five years old; and his house was kept by a maiden aunt, who was on the aged side of sixty. Sandy was a farmer near the Reed water, in Northumberland, and as fine a specimen of the ancient Northumbrian farmer as could be met with—a distinct race, a few samples of whom were here and there to be found within the last thirty

'ears—free, careless, hospitable, happy, boisterous, unlettered, and half-civilized. Sandy was one of these in their primitive state. He was in truth—

> "A fine old English farmer,
> One of the olden time."

He was as hardy as the hills on which his sheep fed. He was ready at all times either to shake hands or to break a head—to give or to take. No one ever entered his house and went out hungry. He had a bed, a bite, and a bottle for every one; and he was wont to say that he would rather treat a beggar than lose good company. He was no respecter of rank, nor did he understand much concerning it. He judged of the respect due to every one by what h called the "rule of good fellows." Burns makes the wife of Tam o' Shanter say—

> "Ilka horse ye ca'ed a shoe on,
> The smith and you gat roarin' fu' on."

But Tam had been but the degenerated shadow of Sandy Reed; for every time he had to pay a visit to the smith with his nag, they would have

> 'Been fu' for weeks thegither!"

When he had business at Morpeth market, his journey home never occupied less than a fortnight, though the distance was not quite thirty miles; for the worthy farmer had to stop three or four days at every hostelry by the way, for the sake of company, as he affirmed, and the good of the road; but he cared not much for going half-a-dozen miles out of his way to add another house of entertainment to the number; and it mattered not to him whether the company he met with were Roundheads or Cavaliers, provided they could show the heel-taps of their bottle, and in the intervals of bringing in a new one, wrestle, run, leap, or put, or quarrel in a friendly way, if they preferred it.

But we shall record a portion of Sandy's adventures, so far as they are connected with our story, in his own words. The following was one of his favourite anecdotes of himself:—

"It was about three years after my wife's death, poor body," (he began) "that I had been owre at Morpeth market, wi' four score o' ewes and six score o' hogs. I was at least comfortable when I left Morpeth, but noughts aboon comfortable; for I had only had twenty queghs* o' English gin (which, thou must understand, in our part o' the country, means Cheviot-made whisky), and seven o' them were public-house ones, which wouldna count aboon three or four guid ones—so thou seest that I had had noughts in the world to make me onything but sober. Hoos'ever, I just thought to mysel', thinks I—drat! I'll away round by Elsdon, and see what a' my cronies there are about. So, 'To the right, Dobbin, my canny fellow,' said I to my nag—and it was as wise an animal as ever man had to speak to; it knawed every word I said, and understud me whether I was drunk or sober, mony a time, when ne'er a one else could make out what I said. But the poor beast had had sae meikle experience wi' me, that it knawed what I meant by a wink as weel as a nod. So I said to it—'To the right, Dobbin, my canny fellow; thou shalt be foddered at awd Betty Bell's t'night, and if a' be as it shud be, thou shalt hae a rest t'morrow tee, into the bargain.' So Dobbin took away across the moor to Elsdon, just as natural as a Christian could hae done. Weel, when I reached Elsdon, and went into Betty Bell's, there were five o' my cronies sitting. They were a' trumps, and they gied me three cheers when I went in, for they knawed that I was out and out a gud 'un.

"'Ha! Sandy!' said they, 'thou'rt welcome, my canny

* The wooden quegh, used as a drinking vessel in those days, contained rather more than would fill a wine glass

lad—we just wanted you to make the half dozen. Hast thou been at Morpeth?"

"'Yea,' said I, 'and hae just come round by Elsdon to hae a boot wi' thee.'

"'So be it,' said they; and we sat down in gud earnest, and three glorious days we had, and would have had mair, but that we drank Betty Bell's cupboards dry. The stars were just beginning to wink out as I got my feet in the stirrups, and to confess the truth, I was winking far worse than the stars. However, Dobbin took across the moors, and I was in the high road for my home. How it was I dinna knaw; but I rather think that I had fallen asleep, and that something or other had scared the nag, and I had slipped out o' the saddle. I mind o' lying very cauld and uncomfortable, half-dreaming, half-waking, and I daresay, more than three parts the worse o' drink. I mind, tee, o' calling to my aunt as I thought, 'Auntie!—do thou hear?—bring another blanket to throw owre me, and put out that light—I canna get a wink o' sleep for it.' Then I thought I found something upon my breast, that was like my little Anne's head, and I put my hand out, and I said, 'Is that thee, Anne love?' But there was no answer; and I gied the head a shake, when, my conscience! there was such a frightened squall got up, that I sprang right upon my feet, and, to my astonishment, there had I been lying upon the moor, wi' Dobbin at my side, and the light which I wished to have put out was neither more nor less than the moon! But what surprised me most of all, and put me about what to dow, was, that what I had taken for my little Anne that had creeped to my side, as she often did when I came home, was nowther more nor less than a wee, ragged infant laddie, that had been lying fast asleep, wi' his head upon my bosom! There wasna a living creature in human shape upon the moor but our two sells; and how he came there was a miracle to me! 'Laddie,' says I, where

dost thou come frae? What be thy faither, eh?—or thy mother? Be they alive?—or who brought thee here? Come, tell me, and I will gie thee a penny.'

"But the poor bairn seemed more bewildered to find itsel' where it was than I did, and the more I offered to speak to it, it cried the louder.

"'Why, thou needna cry,' said I, 'I winna eat thee; but how came thou here?—and where be thy faither and mother?

"However, I could get nought but screams and cries o' terror out o' the little innocent; so I cried all round the moor at the very pitch o' my voice,—'Holloa!—be there any one within hearing that has lost a bairn?' But I am thinking that I might have cried till now, and nobody would have answered, for it is my belief the bairn came there by magie! I canna say that I have seen the fairy folk mysel', though I have heard them often enough, but I am inclined to believe that they had a hand in stealing away the infant laddie frae his parents, and laying his head upon my breast on the moor. I declare to thee, though I couldna stand steady, I was at a stand still what to do. I couldna leave the infant to perish upon the moor, or I shud never hae been able to sleep in my bed again wi' the thoughts on't; and whenever I had to go to Morpeth, why, I should hae been afeared that its little ghost would hae haunted me in the home-coming; and, if I would hae been afeard o' it, it is mair than I would hae been o' meeting the biggest man in a' Northumberland. But if I took it hame, why I thought again there would be sic talking and laughing amang a' wur neighbours, who would be saying that the bairn was a son o' my awn, and my awd aunt would lecture me dead about it. However, finding I could mak naething out o' the infant, I lifted him up on saddle before me, and took him home wi' me.

"'Why, what be that thou hast brought, Sandy lad?'

asked my awd aunt, as she came to the door to meet me.

"'Why, it be a bairn, aunt, that I found on the moor, poor thing,' said I.

"'A bairn!' quoth she—'I hope thou be na the faither o't, Sandy?'

"'I'll gie thee my hand and word on't, aunt,' said I, 'that I knaw nowther the faither nor mother o't; and from the way in which I found it upon the moor, I doubt whether ever it had owther the one or the other.'

"My aunt was easier satisfied than I expected, and, by degrees, I let out the whole secret o' the story o' finding him, both to her and to my neighbours. Nobody ever came to own him, and he soon grew to be a credit to the manner in which I had brought him up. Before he could be more than seventeen, he was a match for ony man on Reed water or Coquet side, at ony thing they dared to take him up at. I was proud o' the laddie, for he did honour to the education I had gien him; and, before he was eighteen, he was as tall as mysel'. He isna nineteen yet; and my daughter Anne and him are bonnier than ony twa pictures that ever were hung up in the Duke o' Northumberland's castle. Ay, and they be as fond o' each other as two wood pigeons. It wud do thy heart gud to see them walking by Reed water side together, wi' such looks o' happiness in their eyes that ye wud say sorrow could never dim them wi' a tear. Anne will be a year, or maybe two, awder than him; but, as soon as I think he will be one-and-twenty, they shall be a wedded pair. Ay, and at my death, the farm shall be his tee—for a better lad ye winna meet in a' Northumberland, nor yet in a' the counties round about it. He has a kind heart and a ready hand; and his marrow, where strength, courage, or a determined spirit are wanted, I haena met wi'. There is, to be sure, a half-dementit, wild awd wife, they ca' Babby Moor, that gangs fleeing about wur hills, for a' the world

like an evil speerit, and she puts strange notions into his head, and makes a cloud o' uneasiness, as it were, sit upon his brow. When I saw that I would have to keep him, I didna ken what name to gie him; but after consulting wi' my friends and the clergyman o' the parish, it was agreed that he should bear the surname o' wur family, and my faither's Christian name; so we called him Patrick Reed. But the daft awd wife came upon him one day amang the hills, and she pretended to look on his brow, and read the lines on his hand, and tald him, frae them, that Patrick Reed wasna his real name, but he would find it out some day—that he was born to be rich, though he might never be rich—and that he had an awd grey-haired faither that was mourning for him night and day, and that he had adopted the son of a relation to be his heir. When he came home he was greatly troubled, but he was too open-hearted to conceal from me, or from Anne, the cause of his uneasiness; and when he had tould us a' that the mad awd wife had said, I tried to laugh him out o' thinking about it, and bade him bring the bottle and take a glass like a man, and never mind it. But Patrick was nae drinker; and he gravely said to me, that the face o' the half-daft woman came owre his brain like a confused dream—that he had something like a remembrance of what she had said; and he also thought that he remembered having seen her. I wish the witch had been in the bottom o' the sea ere she met wi' him; for ever syne then—though Anne and he are as kind and as loving as ever—he isna half the lad that he used to be; and there is nae getting him now to take a game at onything—though he could beat everybody—for either love or money."

Such was one of the stories which rough, honest, fear-nothing Sandy Reed told, in relating his adventures. Now, it came to pass, when Patrick, the foundling of whom he has spoken, had been sheltered beneath his roof for the

space of seventeen years, that Sandy, having introduced the cultivation of turnips upon the lowlands of his farm, proposed to go to Whitsome fair, to purchase cattle to fatten with them, and also sheep from the Lammermuirs to eat them on the ground. He was now more than threescore, and he was less capable of long journeys than he had been; and he requested that his adopted son Patrick, who was also to be his son-in-law, should accompany him; and it was agreed that they should set out for Whitsome together.

But, on the evening before their departure, as the maiden Anne was returning from a visit to the wife of a neighbouring farmer, she was intercepted within a mile of her father's house. The sibyl-like figure of Barbara Moor stood before her, and exclaimed—"Stand, maiden! Ye love the young man whom ye call Patrick—whom your father has so called—and who resides beneath his roof. He loves you; and ye shall be wed, if I, who have his destiny in my hand, have strength to direct it! And yet there must be more blood!—more!—for I am childless!—childless!—childless! We are not even yet!" She paused, and pressed her hand upon her brow; while the maiden, startled at her manner, trembled before her. But she again added—"Yes! yes! —ye shall be wed—the bauble wealth shall be yours, and ye deserve happiness. But hearken, ye maiden, for on the obeying of my words depends your fate. When your faither and Patrick set out for Whitsome fair, request ye to accompany them—insist that ye do, and ye shall return here a wealthy and a wedded wife; for she says it whose words were never wasted on the wind. Swear, maiden, that ye will perform what I have commanded ye."

"Woman!" said Anne, quaking as she spoke, "I never swore, and I winna swear; but I give thee my hand that I will obey thee. I will go to Whitsome fair wi' my faither and Patrick."

"Go! go!" cried the sibyl, "lest the dark spirit come

upon me; and he whom ye call Patrick shall die by his father's hand, or his father by his. But speak not of whom ye have seen, nor of what ye have heard—but go and do as ye have been commanded. Be silent till we meet again."

Anne bent her head in terror, and promised to obey; and the weird woman, again exclaiming—"Go!—be silent!—obey!" hastened from her sight.

When Anne entered the house, her father, and her adopted brother, or lover, were making ready for their journey. She sat down silently and thoughtfully in a corner of the apartment, and her half-suppressed sighs reached their ears.

"Why, what in the globe, daughter Anne," said her father, "can make thee sigh? Art thou sad because Patrick is to leave thee to go to a fair for a day or two? I suppose thou wouldn't hae troubled thy head, had thy father been to be absent as many months. But I don't blame thee; I mind I was tender-hearted at thy age, too—but Patrick knaws better what to say to thee than I do."

"Dear Anne," whispered the youth, taking her hand, "what ails thee?"

"Ask my father," she rejoined, hesitatingly, "that I may accompany you to Whitsome fair to-morrow."

"Nay, thou canst not go, dear," returned Patrick; "it is a long ride and a rough one; and the society thou wilt meet with will afford thee no pleasure, and but small amusement."

"I must go," she replied—"a strange being has laid a terrible command on me!"

"A grey-haired, wild-looking woman?" ejaculated Patrick, and his voice trembled as he spoke.

"Ask me no more," was her reply, "I must—I will accompany you"

"A dead dream," said the youth, "seems bursting into life within my brain. There are once familiar words ready to leap to my tongue that I cannot utter; and long forgotten memories haunting my mind, and flinging their shadows over it as though the substance again were approaching. But the woman that ye speak of!—yes! yes! —there is something more than a dream, dear Anne, that links my fate with her! I remember—I am sure it is no fancy—I do remember having been at a fair when I was a child—a mere child—and the woman ye allude to was there! Yes! yes!—you must accompany us! I feel, I am certain, that woman hath, indeed, my destiny in her hands!"

"Gudeness me!" exclaimed Sandy, what is it that ye twasome are saying between ye? Is there ony light thrown upon the awd story; or, is it only the half-crazed randy—(forgie me for ca'ing the poor afflicted creature by ony sic name)—but, I say, is it only some o' the same nonsense that Babby Moor has been cramming into Anne's ear wi' which she has filled thine, lad? Upon my word, if I had my will o' the awd witch, I would douk her in the Reed till she confessed that every story she has tould to thee was a lie from end to end."

"Well, father," said Patrick—for he always called Sandy father—"let Anne accompany us to the fair—she requests it, and I will also request it for her."

"Ou, ye knaw," said Sandy, "if ye hae made up yer minds between yourselves that ye are determined to gang, I suppose it would be o' no use for me to offer opposition to owther o' the two o' ye. So, if thou wilt go, get thee ready, Anne, my dear, for it will take us to be off frae here by twelve o'clock t'night, for it is a lang ride, and a rugged ride, as thou wilt find it to thy cost, ere ye be back again. I was never there for my own part; but I hear that the sale o' feeding cattle is expected to be gud—and there I maun

be. So, get thee ready, daughter, if ye will go, and hap thysel' weel up."

At midnight, Sandy Reed, his daughter, and his adopted son, with three or four farm-servants, all mounted on light, but strong and active horses, accustomed to the character of the country, set out for Whitsome fair.

They arrived at Whitsome before noon on the following day, having crossed the Tweed at Coldstream. There was one individual in the fair who had some hundred head of cattle exhibited for sale, and that was old Cunningham of Simprin. He himself was present; but he took but small interest in the transactions, for he was becoming old, and was in general melancholy; and a nephew, whom he intended to make his heir, accompanied him, and in most matters made bargains for him and in his name.

Now, Sandy Reed, after walking through the market, said the only lot that would suit him was that of Cunningham of Simprin. We may here observe that, throughout the day, young Patrick became thoughtful and more thoughtful. Even the presence of Anne, who leaned upon his arm, could hardly summon up a passing smile into his features.

After much disputing and sore bargain-making, Sandy Reed, at a good round sum, became the purchaser of all the stock that old Walter Cunningham exhibited in the fair. And when the bargain had been completed, the seller, the buyer, and their servants, retired to a booth together; the former to treat his customer with a bottle, and the latter to spend the "luck-penny," which, on such occasions, he was wont to say, would burn a hole in his pocket before he got home.

Both were men who were accustomed to drink deep—for old Cunningham had sought to drown his sorrows in the bottle; and what would have been death to another man took no effect upon him. Sandy saw him swallow

glass after glass, without his countenance betraying any symptom of change, with vexation; for he had never before met with a superior, either at the bacchanalian board, or at aught else. But, as the liquor went round, the old men began to forget their age (and for a time, for the first time, Walter Cunningham forgot his sorrows), and they boasted of what they had done; and forgetful that each was above threescore, they were ever and anon about to profess what they could still do; but on such occasions, Anne Reed, who sat by her father's elbow, gently and unobserved, admonished him.

Now, when Sandy found that he might not speak of what he could do, he thought there could be no harm in saying what his adopted son Patrick could do. He offered to match him at anything against any man in Berwickshire, yea in all Scotland. The blood of old Cunningham boiled at the bravado. He said he had had three sons—yea, he hoped to have said four—any of whom would have stopped the boasting, and taken up the challenge of his Northumbrian friend. But he said he had still a nephew, and he would risk him against Sandy's champion.

"A bargain be it," cried Sandy, and the young men proceeded to various trials of strength; but the nephew of Cunningham, though apparently a strong man, was as a weaned child in the hands of young Patrick. Their countrymen, on both sides, became enraged, and it soon became a national quarrel. Scores were engaged on either side—knives were drawn and blood spilt: and headmost in the fray, but unarmed, was Sandy Reed, striking to the ground every one on whom his hand fell. But at length he fell, pierced by a knife, by the edge of a pool of water; and his last words were—"Revenge me, Patrick—protect my Anne—mine is yours!"

When weapons were exhibited, young Patrick drew one also, and he dealt a wound at every blow. Just as he heard

the voice of his foster-father, he held the aged Cunningham by the throat, and his hand was uplifted to avenge his protector's death by the sacrifice of the old man's—when a loud, a hurried, and a wild voice cried aloud—"Hold, parricide! hold!—he against whom your hand is raised is your father!"

It was the voice of Barbara Moor. The young man's arms fell by his side as if a palsy had smitten them. He remembered the voice of the sibyl.

"What say ye!" cried the agonised old man—"who is my son?—how shall I know him?" For he, too, remembered her and well.

"He whose hand has been raised against your life," she cried, "and on whose bosom ye will remember and find the mark of a berry! Farewell!—farewell!" she added—"I am childless—ye are not." She had been wounded in the conflict as she rushed forward, and she sank down and died. We might lengthen our story with details; but it would be fruitless. In young Patrick old Cunningham found his long lost son; with her last breath Barbara Moor acknowledged how she had decoyed him from the tent, at the fair, where his father had left him; and how, when she saw Sandy Reed asleep upon the moor, she had administered to the child a sleeping draught, and laid him upon his breast. Vain would it be to describe the joy of the old man, and as vain would it be to speak of the double chagrin of the nephew, who lost not only his laurels during the day, but also his hope of riches. Anne sorrowed many days for her father; but gave her hand to him who, in compliance with her request, his father continued to call Patrick; the fountain by the side of which her father fell is still known in the village of Whitsome by the name of *Reed's Well*; and, on account of the life lost, and the blood shed on that occasion, Whitsome fair has been prohibited unto this day.

# THE SURGEON'S TALES.

## THE DIVER AND THE BELL.

I HAVE witnessed various states of the mind and body of the wonderfully constructed creature, man; and have written down those cases where the two mutually operate upon each other, in such a manner as to bring out startling characteristics, which, by many, are scarcely believed to belong to our nature. I am now to exhibit a case, where an extreme love of mental excitement produced by extraordinary sights and positions, gave rise to a species of disease, which we have no name for in our nosology. The individual was a Mr. Y——, a gentleman of fortune, who came to reside in the town where I practise. When I first visited him, I found him a poor emaciated creature, sick of the world, dying of *ennui*, thirsting after morbid excitements, yet shuddering at the recollection of what he had witnessed. I saw at once that he was a victim of some engrossing master passion, that had fed upon the natural feelings and sentiments, till his whole soul was under the power and operation of the presiding demon; and got him to give me an account of the manner in which he became enthralled.

Even now, he began—and he trembled as the thoughts he was to evolve recurred to him, even now, though it is fully two years since I was placed in one of the most extraordinary situations in which man was ever doomed to be, I cannot call up again the ideas and sensations which then occupied my mind, without trembling, and endeavouring to fly, as it were, from myself, and, by seek-

ing for natural thoughts among natural appearances and converse, rear up again the belief that I am a regularly organized being, capable of again becoming happy among the sons of men. But the thought still haunts me as a spectre, that I may be once more, by some other cause not less fortuitous than that which then took me out of the region of experience, precipitated, in spite of all my care, into some new position, where the feelings which we are led to consider as a part of our nature, may be so entirely changed that no new world we are capable of conceiving any notion of, could possibly produce a more extraordinary disruption of all the old workings of the brain. Oh! it is a fearful thought, but one seldom entertained by the slaves of experience. Changes occur daily to all men; but, in the general case, each mere worldly position of ever-changing circumstances, possesses so much of the form and character of some prior one, that we are very soon reconciled to the idea of a variety composed of a mere mutation of the mixture of old elements. The mind, looked upon as a microcosm peopled by the representations of things that be—of the past and possible, of the future and probable—is held to be our own little world, with which, and all its inhabitants, we are or may be familiar; we forget that there are recesses in it, or capabilities within it, that may contain or produce things as new as striking, as horrible as if they were the creations of an unknown power, out of elements we never saw or heard of. A sane person, living and acting in the world, may be for a time mad, but with the difference, that, while ordinary maniacs know not their condition, he may be conscious of a thinking identity, while all his thoughts seem to be imposed upon him by other powers than those that regulate this sphere, and he is himself, what he was, but placed in a new world, and acted on by new impulses at which he shudders, but which he is sternly bound to receive and

feel. What a view does this open up to the state of man in this lower world!—how much is there in it of a cause of humiliation and trembling. I am myself, from what I suffered, altogether a changed being; having no faith in the stability of things; conceiving myself placed among dangerous rocks and precipices, from which, in the next moment, I may fall, I know not where; and eyeing with doubt and dismay even the most composed and settled of all the circumstances of life. He is a happy man who is doomed to pass from the cradle to the grave, without having cause to *experience* the faithlessness of experience, who has only read of those dreadful disruptions of the mind and feelings, that scatter the old elements, in order that some new consolidating power may throw them into forms and combinations a thousand times more horrible than all the creation of dark brooding incubus.

Like most other men of an ardent and imaginative temperament, I was dissatisfied with the dull routine of ordinary things. I used to feed my fancy with creatures of the possible, and, without the aid of artificial stimulants of the brain, often conjured up imaginary beings and predicaments which had a charm for me, I cannot very well explain or account for. I cared little for dreams, or the artificial combinations produced by narcotics; they had too little of reality for me: I never was satisfied with a mere effort of the fancy, where the judgment was entirely in abeyance, or at least mocked by what it had no control over. In the world around me, I found food for my appetite; whatever I saw or heard of the *real*, I wrought upon in my solitary moments, till I produced creations, that, being actually within the limits of the possible, I could survey with the satisfaction that I was contemplating what might or would be actually experienced in some future stage of the world. Yet it is a fact—and no one who knows anything of morbid indulgences of this kind

can doubt it—that it is questionable, even to myself, whether, upon the whole, I ever derived any real pleasure from these moods of the mind. The imaginary positions I loved most, were generally of the painful kind: the greater the sufferings of the personages concerned in my various plots of combined circumstances, the more was my propensity gratified. From this morbid state of excitement, I was, of course, often precipitated, by the mere decay of the cerebral energy that fed it; and when I was forced again to contemplate and mix with the common affairs of life, I felt the contrast operate to the disadvantage of even the most stirring incidents that are daily befalling mankind. I was, indeed, much in the position of those who stimulate the fancy by extraneous applications; all the boasted efforts of judgment I tried to mix up with and control the workings of my fancy, I found were but a species of delusive energies, to take myself out of a class of dreamers I heartily despised. I was, in fact, just as complete a visionary as they—with this difference, —I thought I required to satisfy the condition of a waking judgment, which, after all, had very little to do in the matter.

There was, however, one peculiarity of my character not found among my class of visionaries. I was always anxious to throw myself into situations that, being new and wonderful, might supply my mind with a species of experience, from which, in my after moods, I might draw, as from a real source, all the *substrata* of my creations. I visited asylums, executions, and dissecting-rooms; accompanied Mr ——, the aeronaut, in his ascent from Manchester; when on the Continent, I stood below the falls of Terne, and descended into that hell upon earth, the mines of Presburg; yet I must avow that I was a coward; the very experiences I courted, I often trembled at, not only at the time when the objects were busy with my senses,

and sending their influences through my nerves to my brain, but afterwards, when I called up the images to my mind, and threw them into the forms that obeyed the creative power of my fancy. I was also, in some degree, peculiar in caring little for the works of fictioneers; if I were to try to account for this, I would trace the cause to the same disposition of mind that led me to despise all artificial modes of stimulus. The fancies of other men roused my scepticism; my own, founded always on experience, and never going beyond the province of the possible, seemed to me to possess a reality sufficient to satisfy the conditions of my deluded judgment. It had been fortunate for me had I been less exclusive in my resources of gratification; and oh, how dearly I paid for these my imaginative flights, may too soon be made apparent to those who follow me in my narrative, to be benefited, I trust, from my errors.

I had nearly exhausted all my stock of real perceptions, and was beginning to be forced to recombine my old thoughts, so as to produce new associations of the strange and wonderful, when I accidentally met with Mr W——, a gentleman well known in the world of experimental science by the improvements he made on the diving-bell, in addition to the contributions of Rennie and Spalding. I was then living at E——, and he was on his way to Portsmouth, to superintend the workings of a bell that had been sent thither for the purpose of recovering the specie contained in the ship A——, which had been sunk on her return from South America. He described to me the construction of the bell, the manner in which it was worked, and the many extraordinary sights that the divers saw in the course of their submarine operations. I told him that I had accompanied Mr ——, the aeronaut, in his ascent from Manchester, and had often felt a strong desire to reverse my former flight, and descend into the great

deep, to see its wonders, and compare my sensations with those I had already experienced in the air. He told me that my wish might easily be gratified; adding that, although he had never been beyond the top of a steeple, he could take it upon him to assure me, that the feeling of vastness and sublimity induced by an aerial ascent, was almost in direct contrast to the sensations of the diver—the one being comparable to the effects produced by the enlarged views of generalization, indulged in by speculative ontologists—the other, to those that result from the inductive process of searching into the physical arcana of nature. He was not aware of the bent of my mind, or his comparison might have been made more suitable to the feelings of one who cared far less for science than the monstrous things of thaumatology; but he had said enough, or rather the mere mention of the subject was sufficient to fire my fancy; and, after he left me, I brooded continually on the subject of the bed of the great deep—that world unexplored by man, where strange creatures obey laws unknown to us, and feed on the dead bodies of those who relentlessly pursue them; where the bones of the men of distant nations meet and cross each other—those of the sons of science and those of the unlettered negro, bound together by tangled sea-weed—orbless skulls, the receptacles of unclassified reptiles, lying on the treasures that the living man sighed to bring home, as the reward of his toils in foreign lands; and where the very mystery of the unexplored recesses throws a green shadow over the strange inhabitants and things of the earth, buried there for countless ages, that makes the whole watery world like a vision of enchantment. I had found a new source of unthought of reveries, that would supply my enraptured hours with aliment according to my wishes. The objects to be seen within the short space circumscribed by the bell, or comprehended within the range of its lights,

could not be many; but there was the new mode, as it were, of existence—the breathing under water, the living in the element of the creatures of the deep, all the multifarious sensations that would spring up in the mind and body, as if some new power of life and feeling penetrated to the very well-springs of existence.

A letter from Mr W—— soon afterwards invited me to Portsmouth, from which I was then not far distant. The divers had been for some time busy; a great part of the wreck had been laid open, and some curious discoveries been made, and treasures recovered, which inspired the workmen with ardour. On the following day, I was at the scene of operation. When I went on board of the lighter, from which the bell was suspended, I examined the apparatus. The bell was then down, the men stood holding the crane, and listening attentively to hear the signals that were, every now and then, coming from the divers. At a little distance was the apparatus of the air-pump, which several other workmen were busily engaged working. The whole scene was calculated to produce an extraordinary impression on a beholder. The sky was hazy; the air thick and oppressive, from the heat of the sun acting upon the dense medium of a mist that hung on the water; there was not a breath of wind to ruffle the surface of the calm deep; the only sound heard was the whizzing of the air-pump, and the clang of the apparatus by which it was worked. There was nothing seen of the bell; it was far down in the bosom of the deep. The chain, by which it was suspended, dipped into the sea and disappeared, carrying the mind with it down to the grim recesses where living, breathing men were buried. Clear as the waters were, the eye could not reach the depth to which the huge living cemetery had descended; a recoiling feeling, which made the heart leap, followed the effort to trace the chain down, down through the translucent sea. The red sun,

struggling through the mist, was reflected in a lurid glow from the surface of the deep. As the air-pump ceased for short intervals, and absolute silence reigned around, a clang, unlike any sounds of earth, came upon the ear—

> "As if the ocean's heart were stirred
> With inward life, a sound is heard."

It was a signal from those in the bell; it seemed as if the sea trembled, and old Ocean spoke from the deeper recesses of his soul. The sound struck the ear as something unnatural, or what might be conceived to issue from a sepulchre when the spirits of the dead hold converse in the still night. The signal was answered; and, in a short time afterwards, there were heard three successive strokes quickly repeated—clang, clang, clang. The quickness of the strokes, and the strangeness of the sound, coming whence such sounds are never heard, seemed the doom-peal of these men.

> "The sea around me, in that sickly light,
> Shewed like the upturning of a mighty grave."

But the sound told other things to the workmen: the wheel began to revolve; after many revolutions, the waters began to boil as if moved by a ground swell, and the large black engine appeared rising up like a mighty monster of the deep.

When the bell was fairly suspended above the water, the crane was pulled round, and the heavy appendage was wheeled over the deck of the lighter. There were three individuals in it, seated high and dry upon the *vis-à-vis* seats. There were instruments of various kinds hung round the inside, the uses of which were explained to me. The men told me that a storm, a few days before, had so broken up and removed the wreck, that it would be necessary to pull the lighter a little farther to the eastward. It came out, too, with some indications of terror which they at-

tempted to conceal, that the dead bodies of those who had perished in the cabin were beginning to make their appearance, now that the hull was broken. Mr W—— looked at me askance, as if to ascertain whether that circumstance would have any effect in making me forego my purpose in descending; and, doubtless, he observed me shudder. But he knew me not: the expedition possessed greater, perhaps grimmer charms to me on that account: the horror that passed over me, as I heard the statement of the men, was only an indication that my zeal was stirred by the expectation of food for my depraved appetite.

"Dead men are not the most dangerous enemies of divers," said Mr W——, with a grim smile. "We have sometimes greater reason to be alarmed from inroads of the living inhabitants of the waters. It is not a week yet since the fearful *tenth* signal rung from the deep; and, upon the machine being raised in great alarm by the workers of the crane, it was ascertained that a shoal of finners (some of them fourteen feet long) had passed close by the mouth of the bell, with a noise like the rushing of a mighty army. But the alarm was greater on the side of the creatures themselves: on observing the bell with the men in it, they lashed their tails with fearful fury, till the waters seemed to boil in the midst of them, and the whole host were enshrined in a thick muddy medium that prevented the divers from seeing an inch before them. The sound, meanwhile, was like that of thunder—snorting, lashing, and shrill cries, produced by some action of their breathing organs, were mixed together; and the confusion into which they were thrown precipitated many of them on the sides of the bell, which being at the time suspended from within five feet of the ground, swung from side to side in such a manner as to rouse the fears of the workmen above before the signal reached their ears. In a short time afterwards, when the bell was raised, we saw the shoal making with great speed

to the westward, blowing, as they careered onwards, with a loud noise. I never knew of a circumstance of the same kind before; and to-day you will not, I trust, be alarmed by such visitors."

This statement roused my fears, already excited by what I had heard of the dead bodies that lay on the wreck; but I adhered to my purpose. The lighter was moved about twenty feet eastward, and the bell was again swung round to be let down, it being resolved that I should accompany the divers in their next descent. I watched the operations with an interest derived from my expected position in the same circumstances with these fearless men. The huge mass hung in the air, dangling over the smooth surface of the sea; and the signal being given, was plunged down. In a moment it had disappeared, and a heavy mass of waters rushed on, swelling and boiling in the abyss, that seemed to have entombed the daring adventurers. The rolling off of the chain in a long succession of coils, and the disappearance of link after link, filled the mind with a shuddering impression of the depth to which they were attaining. The signal was again given; the air-pump began to play and whiz, and my thoughts, burdened with the superstitious fear produced by the narratives I had heard, took a new direction, picturing the men among the floating bodies of the dead mariners, which, among the green lights of the sea, would appear invested with additional horrors—the monsters of the deep playing round them, or feasting upon the decayed limbs—numberless crabs, sea urchins, and centipedes, crawling on members once consecrated to beauty. The silence on board the lighter aided my fancy in its gloomy revels; and when the clang of the hammer on the bell announced the wish of the divers to rise again, I started from a seat on a coil of ropes which I had in my musings taken possession of—having been oblivious of the intervening half hour, during

which I had been shadowing forth the secrets of the green charnel-house, with its surface lying smiling before me in the lurid glare of the still enshrouded sun.

At last, I was called to take my seat in the bell. One of the men came out to make room for me; but, before I entered, the crane was swung round to the west side of the lighter, as the men reported that a more likely field of investigation lay in that direction, where they had observed a bright body which they took for a mass of glittering specie, probably rolled out of the packages, and lying there from its greater specific gravity. On mounting up into the bell, where the two remaining workmen were refreshing themselves with brandy to recover the play of the lungs, which, in the last descent, had suffered from a deficiency of oxygen, I felt a creeping sensation pass over me, in spite of my efforts to be calm and firm. This I attributed to the already excited state of my fancy, from the long train of musings I had indulged in over the green deep. In my ascent with the aeronaut, I experienced a sensation in some degree similar to that feeling of lofty awe which accompanies the expectation of the grand impulse of sublimity—*τον σφοδρὸν και ἐνθουσιαστικὸν πάθος*; but now the action of the heart seemed tending towards a collapse rather than a swell: I felt already the chilling effect of the cold element before I had descended into its womb. I looked round me with a nervous eye, and threw the colours of my fancy on even common objects. The dull yolks of glass placed round the sides to give light, pale and lustreless—the iron tools, wet and brown with rust—the black leather flasks of spirits—the big hammer used for signals of distress—were all strange and invested with new characters; and the two men, Jenkins, an Englishman, and Vanderhoek, a German, with sallow countenances, rendered paler than usual by the effects of the confined air, seemed rather to belong to the watery

element from which they had emerged, than to the fair and smiling earth. I attempted to look unconcernedly; but the German, as he was lifting his flask to his head, scanned me with a ludicrous gaze, and, whether it was that the brandy had, in some degree, inclined him to a merriment that in my eyes seemed like the grin of a demon, or that he wished to let me hear the *ringing* sound of the bell when the human voice echoed within it, I know not; but he accompanied his potations with a stanza of Burger's famous Zechlied:—

"Ich will einst, bei ja und nein
Vor dem Zapfen sterben
Alles, meinen Wein nur nicht
Lass' Ich frohen erben."

And, finishing the verse, he looked again at me, to notice the effect produced on me by the reverberation of the tones, which, reflected from all sides, mixed as it were in the middle, and loaded the ear with a confused ringing noise, similar to what I once heard when nearly drowned in the Thames. If the man had had any intention to increase my alarm, he could not have taken a more effectual way of compassing his intention; for his language—the true and natural diction of spirits—responded to by the confused ringing echoes of the bell, and acting upon a mind already enervated by the weight of the genius of superstition, appeared to be all that was necessary to complete the alarm which I in vain attempted to conceal.

"All ready, Vanderhoek?" cried Mr W——.

"Ja, ja, herr," responded Vanderhoek. "Pull away, Crane-meistern."

And as the men began to work, he dashed carelessly into another stanza of his favourite ballad. I know not if you are acquainted with German; but I cannot resist the desire of gratifying my own ears with a repetition of the sounds of the thrilling consonants which produced so great

an effect on me on that occasion. His voice was rough and guttural:—

"Wann der Wein in Himmelselang,
Wandelt mein Geklimper,
Sind Homer, and Ossian,
Gegen mich nur Stumper."

I would have called out to the man to cease his singing, had I not been afraid of being set down for a coward. The continued sound within prevented me from observing the motion of the bell, as it gradually swung off the deck; but the increasing novelty of my situation, as I saw myself suspended over the calm sea into which I was immediately to be plunged, fixed my attention, while it increased my nervousness. I would now have retreated, had it been in my power. The calculated knowledge of the process of submersion, and of my absolute safety under the laws of hydraulics, lost so much of its power under the reigning influence of the natural instinctive horror of being plunged into the womb of the ocean, that I thought myself on the eve of being drowned; and the same feeling I had experienced when struggling half-dead with the waters of the Thames took hold of me by anticipation. Meanwhile, the German started broken snatches of his song; the bell was gradually descending; the space of pure light between the rim and the green surface of the sea was growing every minute less and less. It was upon that decreasing circle of air that my eye was most intensely fixed; it grew brighter as the inside of the bell grew darker, till in a moment it appeared like a bright line of gold-coloured light.

"There," said Jenkins to me, in a loud tone. "That is the last glimpse. This is the most trying moment for inexperienced divers, when the last beam of day is extinguished."

I could not reply to him. The circle had disappeared; the water was below our feet; we were partially submerged.

I looked up to the yolks of glass, but the light that struggled through them was so pale and sickly that I turned my eyes to the sea below me as a relief to my confined vision. We were now fast descending—one by one the gas lights were changed from their dim paleness to a green hue, the same as that of the sea below us, and, in an instant after, I heard a loud whizzing, which was produced by the displaced body of waters rushing impetuously into the void made by the descending bell. The sound made me instinctively turn my head upwards, as if I had been in the attitude of addressing the King of the heavens, whom I had left in the regions of upper air. I grew dizzy, and thought I would have fallen from the bench, down into the bottom of the sea. My nervousness made me grasp firmly the plank, as my only means of safety from what I conceived to be impending destruction. Whether that sound then ceased, or my hearing became more obtuse, I know not; but the first thing, after a few minutes, that I was conscious of was the grasp of the hand of Jenkins, who held me firm by the arm, and the guttural sounds of the German, as he still carelessly sung detached lines of his ballad. On looking up, the green lights swam in my eyes; but the whizzing sound had greatly ceased; and I directed again my gaze to the apparently bottomless element below, which was as calm as glass, and through which I saw, flying past the mouth of the bell, innumerable fishes, reflecting, as they darted off, a thousand varied hues, in the midst of the green medium through which they hurried.

The continued descent was made apparent to the eye by the progress of the rim of the bell through the water, and indicated, in another form, by the creaking sound of the crane on the lighter, which, rendered indistinct by the medium of the water, seemed to come from miles distant. Though partially recovered from the first effects of the

submersion, I had no proper idea of time, and there was no mode of measuring the depth. It seemed to me as if we had descended many furlongs, though we had not got beyond ten fathoms: I could not get quit of the idea, though I arranged my thoughts in the process of calculation. Jenkins had now let go my arm, as he saw that I was able to sit without danger of falling; and the German was busy peering through his bushy eyebrows down into the deep, as if he expected soon "to see the land." I almost instinctively gazed down for the same object, and it was not without an effort at discrimination by the power of my judgment that I discovered myself seeking a vision of the bottom of the sea, as if it had been a haven for a shipwrecked mariner in distress. While my eyes were thus fixed on the waters—in which I could see nothing but the swarms of fishes flying past, or reeling in the confusion of terror—I was startled, almost to falling off the bench, by a loud reverberating clang on the side of the bell. My first impression was, that the bell had struck on a rock; and I turned fearfully to seek the eye of Jenkins. He held the large hammer in his hand with which he had given the stroke. He told me that he wanted more air, and that this was the signal to the workers of the air-pump. His eye was fixed on the air holes, with which the pipes communicated. I thought he appeared alarmed; he exchanged a look with Vanderhoek, and the eye of the latter was soon also fixed on the same spot. We were yet still descending, and the German, turning round, pointed down. I followed his finger, and saw a thick, hazy-like appearance, as if the waters were troubled, and masses of long sea-weed brushed against the rim of the bell. Vanderhoek immediately seized the hammer, rang two loud peals, and the motion downwards ceased. We hung suspended in the sea, I know not how many fathoms down. A loud hissing sound came from the air-valves; but it was

every moment interrupted, as if some part of the apparatus failed in its continuous working. The eyes of both Jenkins and Vanderhoek were again intensely fixed upon the holes; it was too manifest to me that they both saw something wrong in the working of the air pumps, though they said nothing to me; and, indeed, I was so much affected by their ominous looks that I could put no question to them.

"Is there not an under current here, Karl?" said Jenkins, attempting to appear composed.

"Ja," replied Vanderhoek; "see, there is von gut sign. The meer-weeds are drifting to the east; and see, there is von piece of the wreck moving from the west."

I looked down, and saw the edge of a piece of black timber making its appearance within the verge of the rim of the bell; but, in consequence of the small angle afforded by our pent-up position, we could not observe more than two inches of it. Large bushes of confusedly entangled sea-weed were brushing past, and, as they stuck about the rim, darkened the interior so much that we could scarcely see each other. These seemed of but small importance to Jenkins, who was evidently still unsatisfied with the working of the pumps, and got upon his feet to examine into the cause of their irregular and interrupted action. It struck me, at this time, that Jenkins' question about the current had more meaning in it than was made apparent to me: I suspected that he entertained fears that the air tubes had got entangled in some way with the bell chain. His efforts did not seem to produce any greater regularity of action in the tubes; the whizzing noise continued every now and then to be interrupted; at one time, it stopped altogether for about a minute. The machinery was working reluctantly, and with a struggling difficulty that was apparent to the eye and ear; but other proofs of a more decided and fearful kind were awaiting us. I felt a painful load at my breast, as if I wanted air; my respiration

became quick and unsatisfactory; a swimming of the head came over me; I could scarcely see my companions without great effort to fix my wavering vision. The darkness at the mouth of the bell continued to increase; the piece of the wreck was moving slowly under us; the weeds were increasing. I could perceive that Vanderhoek was also labouring for breath; Jenkins, relinquishing his efforts at the air tube mouths, turned, looked wildly at his neighbour, and, staggering down upon the bench, struggled to get hold of the hammer, which, when he grasped it tremblingly, fell out of his hands down into the bottom of the sea.

"In the name of God! what is the meaning of all this, Jenkins?" I cried, in a voice that was choked for want of air.

He lay upon the bench, and gasped, apparently unable to speak; he looked to Vanderhoek, and pointed to an instrument in the shape of a mattock—shaking his hand, and muttering indistinctly, "Haste! haste!"

The sign and words were perfectly understood by Vanderhoek as well as by myself. I looked on, with the intense agony of fear and impeded lungs, and added some irregular and confused signs (for my voice died in my choking throat) to the German to obey the request of his neighbour—but these were unnecessary: the man himself saw the fearful position in which we were placed, with as keen a perception of the danger, and as anxious a wish to remove it, as either of us. He was, however, struggling for want of air to a greater extent than either Jenkins or myself. His face was swollen and blue, his mouth open, his eyes protruding from his head, his breast heaving like one under the weight of the angel of death. Yet he tried to combat the antagonist powers of cruel fate; and, raising his body from the bench, he bent forward to clutch the mattock, with which to give the clangs that formed

the signal to raise us from our water-bound prison. He had to reach over the body of Jenkins, who lay coiled up, almost lifeless from suffocation; then, in his efforts to get at the instrument, he fell down through the mouth of the bell, and stuck fast among the tangled weed. At this very instant, I heard again the sound of the air-pump whizzing in my ears: it came like the music of angels; and, while Vanderhoek hung fast by a rope that was attached to the bench, I felt the inspiring power of the oxygen coming through the air tubes: my breast rose—my lungs inhaled the sweet aliment—I felt strength infused into my blood and nerves—and, raising myself, laid hold of Vanderhoek; but my energy failed in the effort that exceeded my powers; he fell from my grasp, and plunged overhead among the waters and loose weeds by the side of the dark piece of the wreck, that still seemed to move, though almost imperceptibly, to the east. It was a little time before he came to the surface again, which satisfied me that we were still a considerable way from the bottom, notwithstanding of the accumulation of algæ that had deceived us into a contrary opinion. When his head again appeared within the bell, I was struck fearfully by the horrid expression of his face, which, pale before, now looked green and hideous through the wreaths of weed that hung round his hair. The influx of atmospheric air partially revived his energies for self-preservation; then laying hold of the rope, he got a clutch of the bench, and clambered up. He seemed shocked by some cause of terror, even greater than the danger to which we were yet exposed.

"Shrecken! shrecken!" he muttered, with difficulty. "There is von corpse of a woman there—there—down in the wreck!"

And he pointed to the black fragment of the broken ship that lay below us.

"That is nothing, man," said I. "Give the signal, if you can. See, the air-pump has stopped again. The men in the lighter know not our peril."

He attempted again to seize the mattock, and succeeded in grasping it; but the small supply of air that had been sent us by the temporary opening of the impeded tube, had been only sufficient to revive us slightly; and the suddenness with which his powers were again prostrated, by the recurring weakness that succeeded the cessation of the supply of the natural aliment of the lungs, prevented him from imparting strength to the signal. He gave one weak blow on the side of the bell, and the instrument fell out of his nerveless hands upon the bench. In a few moments more he was stretched beside Jenkins. I myself now tried to lift my arms to seize the instrument. I succeeded only in placing my hands upon it—I was unable to grasp it, and fell, with my back on the side of the bell, powerless, and struggling, with open mouth and heaving sternum, for what came not—a breath of living air.

We must, at this time, have been fully twenty minutes under water; and, as it was our intention to have been an hour, there seemed to be no chance of our being drawn up until we had all expired. I saw plainly, by the noises that came from the tubes, that the men conceived they were working regularly; and, so long as no signal was heard, they would work on, ignorant of the dreadful situation in which we lay. I cast my eyes on my companions. They lay like dead men; my only wonder, now that I can calmly think of the subject, is, that they still kept upon the seats, and did not tumble into the deep. I had scarcely any power of thinking. I sat, writhing under the spasmodic action of suffocation, my eyes fixed in the sockets, my brain swimming, and a burning sensation, like that which attends a paroxysm of brain fever, shooting through the recesses of thought. The recollection of that

moment is even yet madness. The bell was almost dark, and the green light that came through the yolks of glass, fell faintly on the blue swollen faces of my companions, who I thought were dead. I had still power to observe that there was a new feature rising in that unprecedented situation of man's sufferings. Was it possible, it may fairly be asked, that fate had it in store to add to these agonies?

While thus I sat fixed immovably by weakness and despair, I observed that the waters were rising visibly upon us, probably from the absorption of the small quantity of oxygen that remained in the tainted air around us. It had risen up half way between the rim and the seats, and was gradually gaining upon me. A foot more would bring it to the level of where I sat. My feet were already immersed, and the coldness produced by the water operated in combination with the spasms in my labouring chest to destroy vitality. The black fragment of the wreck rose with the waters, and raised obliquely the side of the bell, which may have been an additional cause for the rising of the sea within. Through my glazed eye I saw, lying in a hollow of the broken raft, a white figure—probably that seen by Vanderhoek when he fell into the sea. By and by, it became more visible as the waters rose, and I saw that it was the body of a female who had perished in the vessel. The image of the apparition has haunted me to this hour, and shall do till I die. A part of the dress which she had worn when she perished, still clung to her—about the half of the skirt of a silk gown that had been of some light colour, but had changed to a greenish hue. It was bound to the waist by a sash or belt of a darker shade. Her bosom was bare, and bore the same sickly hue of pale green; her face was placid; the eyes were open; but one of the balls had been extracted by some reptile of the deep; her long hair

flowed among the weeds; and, hanging from the lobe of the left ear, I saw a clear gem that shone with the brightness of the stone called *aqua marina*. One of the arms had been taken off a little above the elbow; the flesh at the end of the stump appeared bloodless, and bleached to the colour of the skin; and limpets and other kinds of small shell-fish lay on or adhered to the cuticle. My feelings recoil from the recollections of the horrors of that apparition; and I fear I may incur the charge of endeavouring to produce an effect by the vulgar mode of harassing the mind with a minute description, too easily effected, of what. for the sake of humanity, should be concealed.

There the body lay in all its green horror. It was rising gradually to my side, within the bell, through the gloom of which the pale skin and light robes sent a sickly gleam. I had no power to move myself away from it. My body was bent so that my face was within a few inches of it; and a slight undulation of the waters that were rising into the bell inch by inch, imparted to the corpse a motion that made it dodge upwards and downwards, as if it made efforts to touch my countenance. All was as silent as death; for the slight agitation of the sea produced no noise. I was gasping for breath; a short period would have put an end to my sufferings, had not the air tubes again begun to send forth slight hissing sounds, and a small portion of the food of the lungs came to afford me sufficient power to contemplate, with greater distinctness and increased agony, all the circumstances of my situation. I felt the small boon instinctively as a relief: my breast again opened; I was able to raise my head so as to be more beyond the touch of the floating corpse; and as I lifted it, my eye fell on the flask of spirits that hung within reach on the side of the bell. I now struggled to seize it, and succeeded; but it was with many painful efforts that I got a portion of the liquor poured

into my mouth. The half-dead physical powers of my system were, by this application, stimulated into something like vitality, and I listened attentively, while my eye was still riveted on the corpse that lay at my side, to the sound of the tubes. A motion of the right limb of Vanderhoek attracted my attention, and raised a hope that, if the air still continued to be supplied, he would recover; I knew, too, that as the bell filled again with the atmospheric supply, the waters would recede. But all my hopes were again prostrated; the valve ceased; the entrance of the air was again stopped; I applied the flask hastily again to my lips before the spasms of suffocation came again upon me, but the power of the spirits seemed to have fled, having no more influence over my system than a draught of water.

Thus was I again precipitated into my former condition of weakness and helplessness—the choking symptoms of suffocation increased again in intensity, and I was under the necessity to lie down on the seat, with my head again on a level with the corpse of the female, that still kept moving and dodging by my side. I was now as powerless to push it away as I was before to remove myself from it. I felt it touch my skin. Its face was close to mine—the pale cold cheek rubbed upon my chin and lips. The glazed eye seemed fixed upon me, and the stump of the torn arm struck upon me as the body moved. A higher undulation sometimes threw her flowing hair over my eyes, where it lay till another movement of the corpse took it off. I would have shut the lids of the protruding orbs that stood fixed in my head, if I had had any power; but I could not—my whole face being swollen, and the muscles as rigid as if in death. I was thus compelled to receive the vision into my mind; and the touch seemed to cling to the decaying sensibilities, as if it formed a part of them. It is impossible that my sufferings could have

lasted many minutes longer if the air tubes had been entirely closed; but, as if it had been determined by the stern fates that I should be suspended for a length of time between life and death, there were kept up, at almost regular intervals, two or three whizzing sounds of the entangled and obstructed apparatus — an indication that small supplies of air were at these moments thrown in upon me. It was only these sounds, the dodging of the pale-green corpse, the touches of its cold skin, the light of its glazed eye, the dark figures of my two companions, and the general gloom of the bell, relieved slightly by the greenish-hued yolks of glass, that I was sensible of perceiving. The internal workings of my mind seemed to have ceased. I had scarcely any consciousness of a conception — the whole cerebral functions concerned in thought and feeling being limited to undefined sensation, that had only some connection with the power of external perception.

Even this partial state of consciousness had died gradually away, for, during a short period, I was totally beyond the reach of the power of any external object. There is a blank in my recollection of these touches and visions, which, though scarcely at the time coming within the province of mind, have since been the most vivid perceptions ever treasured up in my memory. Yet that period of all but total death was no relief to me. The dim hazy vision of all around me dawned again, like the shadowy renovations of a fearful dream that has sunk in sleep, and risen again as the troubled fancy regained a portion of its activity. These indistinct shadows of consciousness, as they came in the wake of the physical power that felt the quickening influence of another draft of air, carried more insufferable sensations in their dark forms than had accompanied my more distinct perceptions. They were mere filmy traces, broken and unconnected—exhibiting to me some-

times only the darkness of the bell, sometimes the mere face; occasionally limited to the eye alone, the stump of the arm alone, the ear-ring alone; sometimes merely the two stretched-out forms of the men; sometimes the green deep and the tangled sea-weed. Then the array of all the things around me would suddenly flash upon me with a unity and a vividness that produced one gleam of almost entire consciousness—in another moment extinguished—and succeeded by another period of all but death—to be again followed by a succession of the broken fragments of vision, when the living powers were in a slight degree revived. I leave it to physiologists and psychologists to account for these sudden exertions of the reluming powers of the mind in the very lowest state of the dying faculties. We see something of the same kind in the physical economy—moments of strength in the most exhausted weakness—bright glows of the taper of life in the socket of death—a collected unity of power in moments of dissolution, as if the spirit made a last struggle to assert its lost authority over the great archangel. I can speak at least to their effects—a wretched boon of nature to miserable man, where he can say no more than that he feels—that the boasted energies of the soul seem to be all rolled up in one sensation of undescribable pain.

I was awakened from this state of stupor by a loud clanking of chains upon the top of the bell; and I heard the sound at the very moment when I felt myself drawing a long breath. I had been unconscious of the working of the air-pump, which must have been going on for some time, though I cannot tell how long. The bell was replenished. I breathed again freely, and became sensible. I looked round me, and saw all things in the same position as formerly. The corpse was still by my side, and my newly awakened horror made me struggle to rise. I succeeded so far as to lean upon my arm, whereby I removed

myself some space from the dead body. The rattling of the chains still continued, and I had the power of thinking so far, as to conjecture that efforts were being made to draw up the bell. But new incidents were now in progress. The air had revived Vanderhoek. I saw him stretching out his arms, as if to relieve his chest, which was heaving violently. He drew long inspirations, and struggled to turn himself on the seat. He succeeded, and I saw his face, which was dreadfully swollen, and of a dark livid colour. His eyes were wide open, and the light of life and returning vision seemed to be illumining them. The first perception he was conscious of was the vision of the corpse. His eye-balls turned, fixed upon it, and recoiled from it; and strange guttural sounds, with half-articulated words—"Shrecklich—shrecken!"—were wrung from him. He looked wildly around him, shuddered, and grasped convulsively the bench. Meanwhile, the rattling of the chains on the bell continued, and a sudden jerk almost precipitated me into the sea. The bell had clearly moved; the next moment it shook violently, from another effort to raise it; it appeared to me to revolve; another sudden jerk followed; it rose perceptibly; the water rushed in to fill up the void; the corpse of the woman whirled round in the eddy; and I saw Jenkins' body fall from the bench into the sea, and disappear.

Vanderhoek, who had now recovered his consciousness, uttered a loud cry as he saw his companion sink. The continued fresh air seemed to strengthen him far more rapidly than it did me, and I perceived that he now made violent struggles to lay hold of the mattock. He succeeded beyond my expectation; despair nerved his arm; he clutched the instrument, and rung three successive clangs on the side of the bell. These were probably unnecessary, as it was manifest now that those on the lighter were doing everything in their power to rescue us

from our perilous situation. The chains still clanked, and we had ascended perceptibly, though how far I had no means of ascertaining. There was another stoppage, the German sat with the instrument still in his hand, and his eye fixed on the body of the woman, which, from the continued whirling of the water, span round and round, as if it had been placed upon a pivot. After looking thus for a few moments, he started suddenly, then reaching up his hand, seized wildly another flask that hung near him, drained it to the bottom, and flung away the empty vessel. Some time passed before I felt any further motion upwards; and the large quantity of strong liquor that Vanderhoek had thrown into his still weak body, operated upon him with a quickness that surprised me. He began to get furious, talked incoherently, swung the iron mattock backwards and forwards, and sung stanzas of the "Zechlied." This was a new source of terror to me. He looked wildly at me as if he did not know who I was; swore the oaths of his country, in which the words "teufel, donner, blitzen," rang pre-eminently; used threats against me, as the cause of all that had occurred to him and his companion. Then he looked at the corpse, and, in a paroxysm of madness, struck the mattock into its white bosom, accompanying his action with wild oaths. I expected every moment that the next stroke would be on my own head, and sat in readiness to seize the weapon, and, if possible, debilitated as I was, to wrench it from his hands. My efforts to calm and pacify him were unavailing. I pointed to the side of the bell, and, in broken accents, for I could yet scarcely speak, told him to ring again; but he did not seem to understand; giving me wild looks, showering broken oaths upon me, and holding up the mattock in a threatening attitude, as if he would cleave my head in twain.

During all this painful period the air was regularly sup-

plied; but the efforts of those on the lighter had not been able to raise us further. In the midst of Vanderhoek's ravings, I thought I heard a sound above, unlike that of the apparatus by which the bell was wrought. It was a creaking, crashing sound, as if the bell were forcing up some heavy piece of wood with which it was encumbered. The thought struck me instantly that the cause of all our misfortunes lay in the drifting of some large piece of the wreck over the top of the bell, which had got entangled with the air-tubes and chain, and defied all the efforts of the workmen to raise us. The creaking sound continued, and, mixing with the whizzing of the air-tubes, the grating of the chain, and the roarings and yells of Vanderhoek, made the scene more dismal than it had yet been. I was in danger of my life—but momentarily redeemed, as it were, from the precincts of eternity—every minute, from the fierceness of the raving being beside me; and I could scarcely hope that all those protracted efforts of the workmen would ever raise us from the immense depth at which we were thus fixed by some great cause. I looked in the placid face of the corpse, and wished that I were as far removed as her spirit was from these complicated evils of the lower deep, and the scarcely less remediable ills of the upper world. But I was soon roused from my dark reverie: a louder crash than I had yet heard sounded over the bell, and produced such an effect upon the excited mind of Vanderhoek, that he roused his body suddenly, and struck a fierce blow at me with the iron instrument he still held in his hand. He had over-calculated his partially-recovered strength, and tumbled into the sea alongside of the corpse. I hesitated whether I should aid him in getting up. I saw him struggling and clinging by the garments of the body, which he tore—so tender was the material—into shreds. As his hold gave way, he clutched the body itself, which, sinking with his weight, disappeared,

leaving him to clamber for support round the lower part of the benches. I could not see him drown, though I shuddered at the danger which awaited me when he might recover his position. At that very moment I distinctly felt the bell ascending; and a fierce whirling and boiling of the waters rushing into the void, would in an instant have sucked him down to rise no more, if I had not seized him by the bushy hair of the head. In that position I held him as firmly as my impaired strength would permit. The bell still ascended, and the buoying power of the water kept him swimming, and made him obey my slightest impulse. The submersion and the contact into which he had come with the corpse had manifestly removed the effects of the liquor, and his imploring eye was eloquent in its appeal to me to continue my grasp. This I did while the bell continued to ascend; the light began to increase in the yolks of glass; and the voices of the men in the lighter greeted my ear. In a moment afterwards, I saw the light of the sun shining red through the windows; in another moment the circle of bright effulgence between the bell and the sea met my enraptured eye. A loud cry of terror came from the workmen as they saw the body of Vanderhoek swimming in the sea. They ceased their process of raising; and swinging the bell to a side, some one got hold of the German, and I let go the grasp of his hair. Two or three more turns of the crane brought the bell on a level with the lighter. I sprung down upon the deck, and fell back in a swoon.

When I recovered, I saw several people standing round me, among whom there was an individual who claimed, for a time, my undivided gaze. He was a tall, handsome individual, dressed in deep mournings. He had a white pocket handkerchief in his hands, which he applied frequently to his eyes; and he looked at me anxiously as he saw me recovering from the effects of the syncope into

which I had fallen. He was proceeding to put some questions to me, when Mr. W—— interfered, and stated that I ought to be allowed time to collect my energies before my mind was led again into the subject of what I had suffered during the time we were in the deep. I was, accordingly, assisted on shore; and, having been put to bed, slept for several hours so soundly that I do not think a single image of what I had seen and heard during that dismal scene occurred to my fancy; but, when in the act of wakening, a confused influx of ideas, all derived from the source of my sufferings, rushed into my mind, and for a few minutes I conceived that I was still in the bell, that I heard the sound of the air tubes, saw Jenkins fall, the corpse lying beside me, Vanderhoek hanging by my grasp of his hair, and all the minutiæ of horrors that then encompassed me; a commotion which comes over me often yet, like a species of monomania, when I will start up, and cling to the bedposts, and scream for terror. It being known that I was awake, Mr. W—— and the stranger came to me. It was their object to get an account of all that had occurred during my descent. I gave it as nearly as I could recollect, and, when I came to describe the appearance and figure of the corpse of the female, I saw the stranger change colour, his frame trembled, his lips turned pale, and he rose and walked through the room as if afraid to listen to my narrative.

"What means this?" said I to Mr. W——, in a low tone.

"The female whose body you saw in the bell," he replied, "was the wife of Mr. G——. He stands before you. He was saved from the wreck, and she perished."

"Good God! and I have already given a part of the shocking detail," I responded.

The stranger heard me, as he paced the room, returned, and sat down by my bedside.

"I am not satisfied that it was my Agnes," he exclaimed, in broken accents, while the tears flowed over his cheeks. "There was a waiting-maid along with us—describe her more particularly. *I can listen.*"

As he uttered these words, I could perceive that he contracted his nerves, his hands were clenched, and over his frame there passed a shiver that seemed to mock the resolution to confirm the mind by a mere physical action. I proceeded to give a fuller account of her dress and earring, the character of her face and figure, so far as I could discover them. Every word seemed to enter his very soul. He turned round again. There was something he wished to say, but he hesitated, trembled, and stammered.

"Was that fair form mutilated?" he asked, at length. "O God! I picture my Agnes torn by monsters of the deep, and hideous urchins resting on her bosom. Yet, why do I ask knowledge that must sit for ever on my heart, and engender visions that in the hours of night must torture my soul, to the end of my pilgrimage in this dark world?"

I hesitated to say more; the orbless socket—the torn stump of the arm—the limpets that clung to her skin—the bosom pierced by Vanderhoek's mattock, were all before me, and shook my soul. But why should I have added an artificial misery to wretchedness like his? I would not dwell on the subject. The stranger imputed my disinclination to satisfy his morbid desire for information to its true cause. A paroxysm of sorrow seized him. He rose suddenly, took his hat, and, covering his pallid face with his handkerchief, rushed out of the room. How often have I thought of that individual! I never saw him again; but his image is for ever associated with the vision of that corpse, shining in the sickly green hue of the medium in which it lay. The body was never found; he never saw it. And was it not well for him? What would have been his

agony, to have seen the beloved of his bosom as I saw her, to have treasured up in his mind the lineaments of that face, the harrowing minutiæ of her mutilated form?

I got an account from Mr. W—— of what took place on board of the lighter while the bell was down. It was a long time, he said, before anything was suspected to be wrong, as the men often remain down for an hour without a single signal coming from them. The difficulty of working the air-pumps first roused their suspicions; and when they found that the bell would not respond to the action of the crane, they knew at once that it had got fixed among some part of the wreck. I need not detail their efforts to relieve us; they are possessed of no interest; the result is known; but who shall know, as I experienced, the horrors of that period?"

My patient, when he had finished his narrative, put his hand over his eyes, and shuddered. I could do little for an individual thus situated; but I visited him often, more with a view to the benefit of science, than from any hope of rescuing him from the dominion of the power he had, like Frankenstein, created, to satisfy a diseased craving of the mind, and trembled at after it was formed, as he found himself helpless and weak in his energies to exorcise it. The continued brooding of his sick fancy over all the strange forms he had seen, produced, in a still greater degree, a weakness of the mind itself, that is, a weakness as regards the sane condition of the mind; for his imagination, drawing a morbid *pabulum* from his disease, grew stronger and stronger in its capacity to invest the images he gloated over with more fearful characteristics, till often, as I was informed, he started up in the middle of the night and screamed out that he was in the present act of suffering again all he had already experienced. But what struck me as still more remarkable in this victim, was, that any change that took place upon him for the

better, in respect of his physical economy, was, while accompanied by a partial release from the domination of his old fancies, generally attended by a kind of new-born desire for another and a new supply of his stimulant visions. This discovery I made one day, when, as I felicitated myself on having effected a confirmation of his nerves, by the application of a course of tonics, I told him that I myself was on the eve of encountering all the unpleasant feelings attendant upon the performance of a painful operation on a very beautiful patient, whose life might too likely fall a sacrifice to her desire to get quit of a mortal disease. His eye brightened, he held out his hands, and supplicated me to allow him to be present, under the assumed character of a surgeon. My refusal produced disappointment and chagrin; and he often afterwards harped on the cruelty of my resolution to discomfit him. He afterwards went to another part of the country to reside with his relations; and the last notice I had of him was, that he was seen bending his skeleton body over the blackened corpses of several individuals who had been burnt to death in the conflagration of a large dwelling-house in the town where he resided

# AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIE SMITH.

If I thocht the world would tak the least interest in the matter, I wad tell it the where an' the when o' my birth, in conformity wi' auld use an' wont in the case o' biographical sketches; but, takin it for granted that the world cares as little about me as I care about it—an', Gude kens, that's little aneuch, thanks to the industry o' my faither, that made me independent o't!—I shall merely say, wi' regard to the particulars above alluded to, that I was born in a certain thrivin, populous bit touny in the south, an' that I am, at this present writin, somewhat aulder than I was yesterday. I dinna choose to be mair particular on the point, because I dinna see that my age has onything mair to do wi' my story, than the ages o' witnesses hae wi' their evidence. Bein born in the usual way, in the usual way was I christened—(*Anglice*, baptised); but hereon hangs a tale, or rather a dizzen o' them. My faither's name was Willie Smith, my paternal grandfather's name was Willie Smith, I had an uncle whase name was Willie Smith, an' twa cousins whase names were Willie Smith; an' it was determined that I should be a Willie Smith too, in order, I suppose, to mak sure o' perpetuatin that very rare an' euphonious family name. But, oh, that they had ca'ed me Nebuchadnezzar, or Fynmackowl, or Chrononhotonthologos, or ony name in the sma'est degree distinctive, an' no that confounded ane, that seems to me to belang to every third man I meet. It wad hae saved me a world o' misery, an' disappointment, an' suffering o' a' sorts. It's just incredible the mischief that simple circumstance has wrought me—I mean, the ca'in me Willie Smith. It may appear, I dare

say, a harmless aneuch thing to you, guid reader, but, my feth, ca' ye yersel Willie Smith just for ae twelvemonth, an' ye'll find it's nae such joke as ye may think, especially if there be half-a-dizzen o' Willie Smiths leevin in the same street wi' ye; whilk is a' but certain to be the case, gang to where ye like. I ken I could never get oot o' their neighbourhood, an' mony a shift an' change I hae made for that express purpose. I maun confess, however, that the name's no a'thegither without its advantages Mony a scrape I hae got skaithless oot o', when I was a boy, in consequence o' its frequency. In the first schule I was at, there war three Willie Smiths, besides me, an' it was thus almost impossible, in many cases, to ascertain which was the real delinquent when mischief had been perpetrated; an' the result was, that the wrang Willie Smith was as often punished as the right ane; but as I, of course, was frequently in the former predicament, I am no sure that, if the account were fairly balanced, I wad be found to hae been a great gainer after a'. Latterly, however, I certainly was not; for the maister, finding the difficulty o' distinguishing between the Smiths, an' that the course o' justice was thus interrupted, at last adopted the sure plan o' whippin a' the Willie Smiths thegither, whenever any one o' the unfortunate name was charged wi' ony transgression. We were thus incorporated, as it were, rolled into one, and dealt wi' accordingly, in a' cases o' punishment.

My schule days owre, I began the world in the capacity o' shopman to my faither, wha was a hosier to business, and carried on a sma', but canny trade in that line. He wasna to ca' wealthy, but he was in easy aneuch circumstances, an' had laid by a trifle, which was intended for me, his only son an' heir. I was now in my twentieth year, the heyday of youth; an', why should I hesitate to say it, a sensible, judicious, well-meanin, an' good-lookin lad, but

(I hesitate to say this, though) wi' a great deal mair sentiment in my nature than was at a' necessary for a hosier. How I had come by it, Heaven knows; but so it was. I was fu' o' romance, an' fine feelin, an' a' that sort o' thing, an' wi' a heart most annoyingly susceptible o' the tender passion. It was just like tinder, as somebody has said—I think it was Burns—catched fire in an instant. For some time, however, as is the case with most youths, I dare say, my love was general, and was pretty equally divided amongst *all* the young and good-lookin o' the other sex whom I happened to see or meet wi'; but it at length concentrated, an' dwelt on one object alone—(this was a case o' love at first sicht)—a beautiful an' amiable girl, wha attended the same kirk in which I sat. I hadna the slightest personal acquaintance wi' her, nor ony access to her society; but this didna hinder me adorin her in my secret heart, nor prevent me puttin doon stockins to customers when they asked for nightcaps. In short, before I kent whar I was, I was plump owre head an' ears in love, distractin love, wi' my fair enslaver, an' rendered useless baith to mysel an' every ither body. Never did the tender passion so engross, so absorb the feelins an' faculties o' a human bein, as it did those o' me, Willie Smith the hosier, on this occasion. I was absolutely beside mysel, an' felt as if livin and breathin in a world o' my ain. This continued for several months; an' yet, durin all that time, I had remained content wi' worshippin the object o' my adoration at a distance, an' that only on Sundays, for I rarely saw her through the week. Whan I said, however, that I was content wi' this state o' matters, I am no sure that I hae said precisely what was true. Had I said that I lacked courage to mak ony nearer advances, I wad, perhaps, hae expressed mysel fully mair correctly. This was, in fact, the case; I couldna muster fortitude aneuch to break the ice, an' yet I didna want encouragement either. My fair captivator soon

discovered the state o' my feelins regardin her, as she couldna but do, for my een war never aff her, an' my looks war charged wi' an expression that was easily aneuch interpreted. She therefore—at least I thocht sae—kent perfectly weel how the laun lay; an' if I didna mak a guid use o' the impression I had made in my turn—for this I thocht I saw too in sundry little nameless things—the faut was my ain, as I didna want such encouragement as a modest and virtuous girl could, under the circumstances, haud oot to a lover. She looked wi' an interest on me, which she couldna conceal whanever we met, an' I frequently detected the corner o' her bright blue eye turned towards me in the kirk. Often, also, have I seen her sittin in melancholy abstraction when she should hae been listenin to the minister; but could *I* blame her, whan she was thinkin o' me? Of *that*, from all I could see an' mark, I was satisfied.

At length, unable to endure the distraction o' my feelins langer, and encouraged by the wee symptoms o' reciprocal affection which I had marked in my enslaver, assurin me o' my bein on pretty safe ground, I cam to the desperate resolution o' makin a decisive move in the business. I resolved to *write* my beloved; to confess my passion, and to beg that she would allow me to introduce myself to her. This resolution, however, I fand it much easier to adopt than to execute. There was a faint-heartedness aboot me that I couldna get the better o'; and a score o' sheets o' paper perished in the attempts I made to concoct something suitable to the occasion. At length, I succeeded; that is, I accomplished such a letter as I felt convinced I couldna surpass, although I wrought at it for a twelvemonth.

Havin faulded this letter, which I did wi' a tremblin hand and palpitatin heart, I clapt it into my pocket-book, whar it lay for three days, for want o' courage to dispatch it, and, in some sort, for want o' opportunity too; for if I

sent it by the post, there was a danger o't fa'in into the hands o' Lizzy's faither—Lizzy Barton bein the name o' my enthraller; and there was naebody else that I could think o' employin in the business. At length, however, I determined to dispatch it at a' hazards. There was a wee bit ragged, smart, intelligent laddie, that used to be constantly playing at bools aboot oor shop-door, and whom we sometimes sent on bits o' sma' messages through the toun; and on him I determined to devolve the important mission of deliverin my letter. Accordingly, ae day when my faither was oot, and naebody in the shop but mysel—

"Jock," cried I, waggin the boy in, "come here a minnit." Jock instantly leaped to his feet—for he was on his knees, most earnestly engaged in plunkin, at the moment—and, crammin a handfu o' bools into his pocket, was, in a twinklin, before me; when, wipin his nose wi' the sleeve o' his jacket, and looking up in my face as he spoke—

"What's yer wull, sir?" said Jock.

"Do ye ken Mr. Barton's, Jock?" said I.

"Brawly, sir," replied Jock.

"Weel, Jock, my man," continued I, but wi' a degree o' trepidation that I had great difficulty in concealin frae the boy, "tak this letter, and go to Mr. Barton's wi't, and rap canny at the door, and ask if Miss Barton's in. If she's in, ask a word o' her; and, when she comes, slip this letter into her haun. If she's no in, bring back the letter to me, and let naebody see't. Mind it's for *Miss Barton*, Jock, and nae ane else. Sae ye maunna be paveein't aboot, but keep it carefully hidden under yer jacket, till ye see Miss Barton hersel; then whup it oot, and slip it into her hand that way;"—and here I fugled the proper motion to Jock. "Noo, Jock," I continued, "if ye go through this job correctly and cleverly, I'll gie ye a saxpence." Jock's eyes glistened wi' delight at the magnificence o' the

promised reward, so far transcendin what he had been accustomed to receive. He wad hae thocht himsel handsomely paid wi' a ha'penny, and wad hae run sax miles ony day for a penny.

Having dispatched Jock, after seein the letter carefully buttoned up inside his jacket, I waited his return wi' a painfulness o' suspense, and intensity o' feelin, that I wad rather leave to the reader's imagination, than attempt to describe. It was most distressin—most agitatin. At length, Jock appeared—I mean in the distance. My heart began to beat violently. He bounced into the shop; my trepidation became excessive; my knees trembled; my lips grew as white as paper; I could hardly speak. At last—

"Jock," said I, wi' a great effort, "did ye see her?"

"Yes," said Jock, "and I gied her the letter."

"And what did she say?"

"She asked wha it was frae."

"And ye tell't her?"

"Ay."

"And what did she say then?"

"She just leugh, pleased-like; and her face grew red, and she stappit it in her bosom, and said, 'Vera weel, my man:' and syne shut the door."

Oh, what pen could describe the feelins o' joy, o' transport, that were mine at this ecstatic moment! She had smiled wi' delight on hearin my name; she had blushed when my letter was put into her hands; and she had put that letter—oh, delicious thought!—into her bosom. The proof o' her love was conclusive. There was nae mistakin what were her feelins towards me. Jock's artless tale had put that beyond a' doot. I was noo put nearly distracted wi' joy. But, if the merely gracious reception of my letter was capable o' inspirin me wi' this feelin, what degree o' happiness could be imparted by a reply to it, and that o' the most favourable kind? (It could be ascer-

tained by the Rule o' Three.) That degree o' happiness, whatever it is, was bestowed on me. In the course of the ensuing day, I received the following sweet billet by the postman, written by Lizzy's own dear hand:—

"Miss Barton presents her compliments to Mr. Smith, and will be happy of his company to tea, to-morrow evening, at six o'clock."

Oh, hoo I noo langed for the "to-morrow evenin at six o'clock!" And yet I trembled at its approach, wi' an undefined, but overwhelmin feelin o' mingled love and shame, and hope and fear. It was just what I may ca' a delightfully painfu' predicament. Regardless, however, o' my feelins, the appointed hour cam round, and whan it did, it saw me dressed in my best, and, wi' a flutterin heart, stan'in at Lizzy's faither's door, wi' the knocker in my hand. I knocked. I heard a movement o' the sneck behind. The door opened, and my angel stood before me. I smiled and blushed intensely, without sayin a word. Miss Barton stared at me wi' a look o' cauld composed surprise. At length—

"Miss Barton," I stammered oot, "I am come, according to your invitation, to"——

"My invitation, sir!" said Miss Barton, noo a little confused, an' blushin in her turn. "What invitation? I haena the pleasure o' ony acquaintance wi' ye, sir. Ye're a perfect stranger to me."

"I houp no a'thegither, Miss Barton," replied I, makin an abortive attempt at a captivatin smile. "I took the liberty o' addressin a letter to ye yesterday; an' here's yer invitation on the back o't," continued I, an' noo puttin her ain card into her hands. The puir lassie looked confounded, an', in great agitation, said—

"Oh, sir, it's a mistak! I'm so sorry. It's an entire mistak on my part. Yer'e no the person at a' I meant. I thocht the letter was frae anither gentleman—a different

person a'thegither. It's the name has misled me. I am really so sorry." An' she curtsied politely to me, an' shut the door.

Ay, here, then, was a pretty dooncome to a' my air-built castles o' luve an' happiness! It was a mistak, was it?—a mistak? I wasna the person at a'! She thocht the letter was frae anither gentleman a'thegither! An', pray, wha was this gentleman? A' that, an' a deal mair, I subsequently fand oot. The gentleman was a certain Willie Smith—a young, guid-lookin fallow, who sat in the same kirk wi' us, an' between whom an' Lizzy there had lang existed the telegraphic correspondence o' looks an' smiles, an' sighs, an' blushes—in fact, just such a correspondence as I had carried on mysel, wi' this important difference, however, that it wasna a' on ae side, as it noo appeared it had been in my case. The other Willie Smith's returns were real, while mine were only imaginary. I needna enlarge on the subject o' my feelins under this grievous an' heart-rendin disappointment. It will be aneuch to say that it pat me nearly beside mysel, an' that it was amaist a hale week before I tasted a morsel o' food o' ony kind. I was in a sad state; but time, that cures a' ills, at length cured mine, too, although it didna remove my regret that a name so unhappily frequent as Willie Smith had ever been bestowed on me.

Havin already described mysel as bein o' a susceptible nature, and bein at this time in the prime o' youth, it winna surprise the reader to learn that I soon after this fell in love a second time. The object o' my affections, on this occasion, was a pretty girl, whom I met wi' at the house o' a mutual freen. She was a stranger in oor toun, an' had come frae Glasgow—o' which city she was a native—on a short visit to a relation. The acquaintance which I formed wi' this amiable creature soon ripened into the most ardent affection, an' I had every reason, very early, to believe that

my love was returned. The subsequent progress of our intimacy established the delightful fact. We eventually stood on the footin o' avowed, an' all but absolutely betrothed lovers. Soon after this, Lucy Craig, which was the name of my beloved, returned to Glasgow, but not before we had settled to maintain a close and regular correspondence.

The correspondence wi' Lucy, to which I hae alluded, subsequently took place; an', for several months—durin which I had made, besides, twa or three runs to Glasgow, to see her—mony a sweet epistle passed between us—epistles fu' o' lowin love, an' sparklin hopes, an' joy. I may as weel here remark, too, that, on the occasions o' my visits to Lucy, I was maist cordially an' kindly received by her mother—a fine, decent, motherly body, an' a widow—Lucy's father havin died several years before. Aweel, as I said, our correspondence went on closely an' uninterruptedly; but I maun noo add, wi' a restriction as to time, an' say for aboot five months, at the end o' which time it suddenly ceased, on the pairt o' Lucy, a'thegither. She was due me a letter at the time; for I had written three close on the back o' each other, which were yet unanswered. In the greatest impatience an' uneasiness, I first waited ae week, an' then anither, an' anither, an' anither, till they ran up to aboot six, whan, unable langer to thole the misery which her seemin negligence, or it micht be something waur, had created, I determined on puttin my fit in the coach, an' gaun slap richt through mysel, to ascertain the cause o' her extraordinary silence. To this proceedin—that is, my gaun to Glasgow—I was further induced by anither circumstance. There was a mercantile hoose there, wi' which my faither had dealt for twenty years, an' which had gotten, frae first to last, mony a thoosan pounds o' his money—a' weel an' punctually paid. Noo, it happened that, twa or three days before this, my faither had dispatched an order

to this house for a fresh supply o' guids, whan, to oor inexpressible amazement, we received, instead o' the guids, a letter plumply refusin ony further credit, an' demandin, under a threat o' immediate prosecution, payment o' oor current account—amountin to aboot £150. To us this was a most extraordinary affair, an' wholly inexplicable, an' we resolved to know what it meant, by personal application to the firm. This, then, was anither purpose I had to serve in gaun to Glasgow, to which I accordingly set out, wi' the folks hunner-an'-fifty pounds in my pocket.

On arrivin in the city just named, my first ca', of course, was on Lucy. But this wasna accomplished withoot a great deal o' previous painfu feelin. It was twa or three minutes before I could rap. At length I raised the knocker, an' struck. Lucy opened the door. She stared wildly at me, for a second, an' then, utterin a scream, ran into the house, exclaimin, distractedly—"O James, James! mother, mother! here's Mr. Smith's ghost!" And she screamed again more loudly than ever, an' flung herself on the sofa, in a violent fit o' hysterics.

Here, then, was a pretty reception. I was confounded, but stepped leisurely into the hoose, after Lucy, whom I found extended on the sofa, an' her mother an' a strange gentleman beside her—a stranger to me at least—endeavouring to soothe her, and calm her violence. On the mother, my presence seemed to hae nearly as extraordinary an effect as on the dochter. Whan I entered the room, she, too, set up a skirl, and fled as far back frae me as the apartment wad admit, exclaimin—

"Lord be aboot us, Mr. Smith! is that you? Can it be possible? Are ye in the body, or are ye but a wanderin spirit? Lord hae a care o' us, are ye really an' truly leevin, Mr. Smith?"

"Guid folks," said I, as calmly as I could, in reply to this strange rhapsody, "will ye be sae kind as tell me what

a' this means?" An' first I looked at the dochter, wha was still lyin on the sofa, wi' her face buried wi' fricht in the cushions, and then at the mother, wha was sittin in a chair, starin at me, an' gaspin for breath, but noo evidently satisfied that I was at least nae ghaist.

"Means, Mr. Smith!" said she, at intervals, as she could get breath to speak; "oh, man, didna we hear that ye were dead! Haena we thocht that ye were in yer grave for this month past! Dear me, but this is extraordinar! But will ye just step this way wi' me a minnit." An' she led the way into another room, whither I followed her, in the hope o' getting an explanation o' the singular scene which had just taken place; an' this explanation I did get. On our entering the apartment, my conductress shut the door, an', desirin me to tak a seat, thus began—"Dear me, Mr. Smith, but this is a most extraordinar, an' I maun say, a most unlucky affair. Werena we tell't, a month ago, that ye were dead an' buried, an' that by mair than ane—ay an' by the carrier frae yer ain place, too, at whom Lucy made inquiry the moment we heard it? An', mair than a' that," continued Mrs. Craig, "here's yer death mentioned in ane o' the newspapers o' yer ain place." Saying this, she took an auld newspaper frae a shelf, an', after lookin for the place to which she wanted to direct my attention, put it into my hands, wi' her thoom on the following piece o' intelligence:—"Died, on the 16th current, at his father's house, ——, Mr. William Smith, in the 23d year of his age."

"Noo, Mr. Smith," said Mrs. Craig, triumphantly, "what were we to think o' a' this, but that ye were really an' truly buried? The place, yer name, yer age, a' richt to a tittle. What else could we think?"

"Indeed, Mrs. Craig," said I, smilin, "it is an odd business, an' I dinna wunnur at yer bein deceived; but it's a' easily aneuch explained. It's this confounded name

o' mine that's at the bottom o' a' the mischief. The Willie Smith here mentioned, I need hardly say, I suppose, is no me; but I kent him weel aneuch, an' a decent lad he was —he just lived twa or three doors frae us; an', as to the carrier misleadin ye, I dinna wunnur at that either—for he wad naturally think ye were inquirin after the deceased. But there's nae harm dune, Mrs. Craig," continued I.

"I'm no sure o' that," interrupted my hostess, wi' a look an' expression o' voice that rather took me aback, as indeed, had also the *triumphant* manner in which she had appealed to me if they could be blamed for havin believed me dead. This she was aye pressin on me, an' I was rather surprised at it; but it was to be fully accounted for.

"No!" said I, whan Mrs. Craig expressed her uncertainty as to there bein ony mischief dune; "isna there Lucy to the fore, lookin as weel an' as healthy as ever I saw her, an' "——

"Lucy's married!" interposed Mrs. Craig, firmly and solemnly.

"Married!" exclaimed I, starting frae my seat, in horror an' amazement—"Lucy married!"

"'Deed is she, Mr. Smith, an' yon was her husband ye saw; an' ye canna blame her, puir thing! I'm sure mony a sair heart she had after ye. I thocht she wad hae gratten her een oot; but, bein sure ye were dead, an' a guid offer comin in the way, ye ken, she couldna refuse't. It wad hae been the heicht o' imprudence. Sae she juist dried her een, puir thing, an' buckled to."

"Exactly, Mrs. Craig—exactly," said I, here interruptin her; "I understan ye—ye need sae nae mair." An' I rushed oot o' the door like a madman, an' through the streets, withoot kennin either what I was doin or whar I was gaun. On recovering my composure a little, I fand mysel in the Green o' Glasgow, an' close by the river side. The clear, calm, deep water tempted me, in the desperation

o' my thochts. Ae plunge, an' a' this distractin turmoil that was rackin my soul, an' tearin my bosom asunder, wad be stilled. In this frame o' mind, I gazed gloomily on the glidin stream; but, as I gazed, better thochts gradually presented themsels, an' finally, resentment took the place o' despondency, whan I reflected on the heartless haste o' Lucy to wed anither, thereby convincin me that, in losin her, my loss was by nae means great. So then, to mak a lang story short, in place o' jumpin into the Clyde, I hied me to a tavern, ate as hearty a supper as ever I ate in my life, drank a guid, steeve tumbler o' toddy, tumbled into bed, sleepit as sound as a caterpillar in winter, an' awoke next mornin as fresh as a daisy an' as licht as a lark, free frae a' concern aboot Lucy, an' perfectly satisfied that I had acted quite richt in no droonin mysel on the previous nicht.

Havin noo got quit o' my love affairs, my first business, next day, was to ca' on the mercantile firm alluded to in another part o' the narrative; and to their countin-hoose I accordingly directed my steps—and thae steps, when I entered their premises, were a wee haughty, for I felt at once the strength o' the money in my pouch, and a sense o' havin been ill-used by them. On enterin the countin-hoose, I fand the principal there alane, seated at a desk.

This gentleman I knew personally, and he kent me too; for I had frequently ca'ed at his office in the way o' business, and on these occasions he had aye come forrit to me wi' extended hand and a smilin countenance. On the present, however, he did naething o' the kind, He sat still, and, lookin sternly at me as I approached him—

"Well, Mr. Smith," he said, "are ye come to settle that account? Short accounts make long friends, you know," he added, but wi' a sort o' ferocious smile, if there be such a thing.

"I wad like first to ken, sir," I replied, "what was the

meanin o' yer writin us sic a letter as we had frae ye the ither day?"

"Why, Mr. Smith," said Mr. Drysdale, which was the gentleman's name, "under the peculiar circumstances of the case, I don't see there was anything in that letter that ought to have surprised you. It was a perfectly natural and reasonable effort on our part to recover our own."

"A reasonable effort, sir, to recover your own!" said I indignantly. "What do you mean? My faither has dealt wi' ye these twenty years, and I don't suppose ye ever fand it necessary to mak ony effort to recover your money oot o' his hands. I rather think ye were aye paid withoot askin."

"Oh, yes, yes," replied Mr. Drysdale, doggedly; "but I repeat that recent circumstances have altered the case materially."

"What circumstances do ye allude to, sir?" said I, wi' increasin passion.

"What circumstances, sir, do I allude to?" replied Mr. Drysdale, fiercely. "I don't suppose you required to come here for that information; but you shall have it nevertheless, since you ask it." And, proceeding to a file of newspapers, he detached one, and, throwing it on the desk before me, placed his finger, as Mrs. Craig had done on another occasion, on the bankrupt list, and desired me to look at *that*. I did so, and read, in this catalogue of unfortunates, the name of "William Smith, merchant, ——. Creditors to meet," &c. &c.

"Now, sir," said Mr. Drysdale, with a triumphant sneer, are you satisfied?"

"Perfectly, sir," I replied; "but you will please to observe that that William Smith is not my father. He's a totally different person."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Drysdale, "not your father! Who is he, then? I didn't know there was any other

William Smith, of any note in trade, in your town. I did not, indeed, look particularly at the designation; but took it for granted it was your father, as, to my certain knowledge, many others have also done."

"Indeed!" replied I; "why, that is mair serious. Some steps maun be taen to remedy that mischief."

"Without a moment's delay," said Mr. Drysdale, who was already a changed man. "Your father must advertise directly, saying he's not the William Smith whose name appears in the bankrupt list of such a date. Lose not a moment in doing this, or your credit'll be cracked throughout the three kingdoms. It has already suffered seriously here, I can assure you."

Having paid Mr. Drysdale his account, which he wasna noo for acceptin—sayin that, if we had the sma'est occasion for the money, to use it freely, without regardin them—and havin thanked him for his advice as to counteracting the evil report that had gane abroad respectin us, I hurried awa to put it in execution; and thinkin it very hard to be subjected to a' this trouble sae innocently, and to hae, at ane and the same time, a pair o' such calamities sae oddly thrust upon me, as my ain death, and the bankruptcy o' my faither. However, sae it was. But my business noo was to remedy, as far as possible, the mischief that had been done by the unfounded rumour o' oor insolvency. Wi' this view I hastened awa to a newspaper office, to begin the cure by an advertisement; and, in doin this, I had occasion to pass the coach-office whar I had landed the day before. Observin the place, I thocht I micht as weel step in and secure my ticket for the following day, when it was my intention to return hame. Accordingly, into the office I gaed; and, whan I did sae, I fand the clerk in earnest conversation wi' twa men, ane o' whom was busily employed in lookin owre the way-book or register o' passengers' names. They didna at first observe me enter;

but, whan they did, there was an instant pause in their conversation; and I observed the clerk, after he had glanced at me, tippin a significant wink to ane, and gently punchin the other wi' his elbow. Then a' three glanced at me. I couldna understand it. However, I said nothing; thinkin they were settlin some private business thegither, and, oot o' guid nature, wad rather wait a minute or twa than interrupt them. But my waiting wasna lang. Before I had been an instant in the office, ane o' the men cam roun to whar I was stan'in, and, lookin me fiercely in the face, said—

"What's your name, sir, if you please?"

"My name, sir!" replied I, as angrily—for I thocht the fellow put the question in a very impertinent sort o' way—"what business hae ye wi' my name?"

"Oh, mair than ye're aware o', p'raps," says he. "An' it's a bad sign o' a man whan he'll no tell his name," says he. This touched me to the quick, an' I dare say the vagabond kent it wad, an' did it on purpose. It was a wipe at my character which I could by nae means submit to. So says I to him, says I—

"Freen, ye'll observe that I'm no denyin my name—I'm only disputin yer richt to demand it. I'm no ashamed o' my name, sir, although it certainly has cost me some trouble in my day. My name, sir, is William Smith—sae mak o't what ye like."

"I should mak a couple o' guineas o't, at the very least," said the fellow, wi' a smile; and at the same time catchin me by the breast o' my coat, and sayin that I was his prisoner.

"Prisoner!" exclaimed I, in amazement, "prisoner! what do you mean?"

"I mean just exactly what I say," said the fellow, quite coolly; and, thinkin he saw in me some show o' a spirit o' resistance, whilk there really was, he touched me wi' a bit thing like a wean's whistle, and winked to his neebor to

come to his assistance, which the latter immediately did, and catched me by the ither breast o' my coat.

"Come along," said baith, now beginnin to drag me wi' them.

"No a fit," said I, resistin, "till I ken what for I'm used this way."

"Oh! ye don't know, Mr. Innocence!" said the fellow wha first took haud o' me; "not you—you're amazed, an't you? You can't suppose there's such a thing as fugæ warrants out against you! And you can't believe I should have such a thing in my pocket," added the scoonril, takin' a piece o' paper oot o' his pouch, and haudin't up before my een, but oot o' my reach. "There, my lad, are you satisfied now? That's the thing I walks by."

Then, havin replaced the paper in his pouch, he went on, but now, apparently, more for the information of the bystanders (of whom there was, by this time, a considerable number gathered together), than for mine.

"You're apprehended, Mr. Smith, by virtue of a fugæ warrant, obtained at the instance of Messrs. Hodgson, Brothers, & Co., on the evidence of two credible witnesses —namely, Robert Smart and Henry Allan—who have deponed that you were going beyond seas; you being indebted to the said Hodgson, Brothers, & Co., in the sum of £74. 15s. 9d. sterling money. There's cause and ground for yer apprehension, Mr. Smith," continued the fellow; so, no more about it, but come along quietly, and at once, or it may be worse for you."

"I'll see you shot first," said I. "I ken naething aboot your Hodgson, Brothers—never heard o' them before. I owe them nae money, nor onybody else, but what I can pay; and I haena, nor ever had, ony intention whatever o' leavin my ain country."

"A' quite natural statements these, Mr. Smith, "said

the man wha first took haud o' me; "but ye'll observe we're no bound to believe them. All that we have to do, is to execute our duty. If you are wronged, you may have your redress by legal process. In the meantime, ye go with us." And again the two commenced draggin me oot o' the office.

"May I be hanged if I do, then!" said I, passionately; for my blood was noo gettin up. It wad hae been far better for me, in the end, if I had taen things calmly—for I could easily hae proven my identity, and, of course, the messengers' error in apprehendin me; but my prudence and patience baith gave way before the strong feelin o' resentment, which a sense o' the injustice I was sufferin had excited.

"May I be hanged if I do, then!" said I; and wi' that I hit ane o' the fellows a wap on the face that sent him staggerin to the other side o' the office. Havin done this, I turned roun', quick as thocht, and collared the ane that still held by me, a proceedin which was immediately followed by a wrestle o' the most ferocious and determined character. I was the stouter man o' the twa, however, and wad sune hae laid my antagonist on the breadth o' his back, but for his neebor, who, now rendered furious by the blow which I had gien him, sprang on me like a tiger; and, between them I was borne to the groun', the twa fa'in on the tap o' me. Here, again, however, the battle was renewed. I continued to kick and box richt and left, wi' a vigour that made me still formidable to my enemies; while they, to do them justice, lent me kicks and blows in return, that nearly ca'ed the life out o' me. There, then, were we a' three rowin on the floor, sometimes ane uppermost an' sometimes anither, wi' oor faces streamin o' blude, and oor coats a' torn in the most ruinous manner. It was an awfu' scene, and such a ane as hadna been seen often in that office before, I dare say. As micht be expected,

we had a numerous audience, too The office was filled wi' folk, the door was choked up wi' them, and there was an immense crowd in the street, and clusters at the window, a' tryin to get a sicht or a knowledge o' what was proceedin within. Baith the commotion and the concourse, in fact, was tremendous—just appallin to look at. But this was a state o' matters that couldna last lang. My assailants havin ca'ed in the assistance o' a couple o' great, big, stout fallows o' porters, I was finally pinned to the floor, whan my hauns bein secured by a pair o' handcuffs, I was raised to my feet, again collared by the twa officers, and a cry havin been made to clear the road, I was led oot o' the office in procession; a messenger on each side o' me, the twa porters ahint, and ane before, openin a passage through the crowd, whose remarks, as I gaed alang, were highly flatterin to me:—

"What an awfu'-like ruffian!" said ane. "What a murderous-lookin scoonril!" said anither.

"What's he been doin?" inquired a third.

"Robbin the mail-coach," answered a fourth; "and they say he has murdered the guard an' twa passengers."

"Oh! the monster!" exclaimed an auld wife, whom this piece of accurate information had reached; "the savage, bloody monster! Was ever the like heard tell o'! The gallows is owre guid for him."

In short, I heard mysel, as I was led alang, charged wi' every crime that human wickedness is capable o', although I perceived that the robbery o' the mail, and the murders o' the guard and passengers, was the favourite and prevailing notion; a notion which, I presumed, had arisen frae the circumstance o' the row's havin had its origin in a coach office. Some reports hae been waur founded. As to the reflections on my appearance, I couldna reasonably quarrel wi' them; for, really, it was far frae bein prepossessin; and o' this I was quite sensible. My coat was

hingin in tatters aboot me; my hat was crushed oot o' a' shape; and my face was hideously disfigured wi' blude, and wi' unnatural swellins frae the blows I had gotten.

Wi' the reflections on my appearance, then, as I hae said, greatly improved as it was by the display o' my handcuffs, I couldna justly fin' faut. By-and-by, however, we reached the jail; and into ane o' its strongest and best secured apartments was I immediately conducted. Havin seen me fairly lodged here, my captors took their leave o' me; ane o' them sayin, as he quitted the cell, and shakin his head as he spoke—

"If ye don't rue this job, friend, my name's not what it is—that's all."

The door bein noo closed on me, an' a fine opportunity bein thus presented me for indulgin in a little reflection on my present circumstances an' situation, I accordingly began to do so; but I fand it by nae means a very agreeable employment. Amang ither things, it struck me that I had exposed mysel' sadly, and very unnecessarily, since I could easily, as I believe I hae before remarked, hae shown that they had put the saddle on the wrong horse; but I had allowed my passion to get the better o' me, an' instead o' takin the richt and prudent course o' establishin this by a quiet procedure, had resisted, an' foucht like a thief taen in the fact. However, the business was noo hoo to mend the matter, an' it was some time before I could discover precisely hoo this was to be done—at least wi' a' that expedition I wad hae liked. At last it struck me that I couldna do better than intimate my situation to Mr. Drysdale, an' request o' him to come an' see me. This, then, I immediately did—the jailor furnishin me wi' paper, pen, an' ink, an' undertakin to have my letter delivered as directed, which was faithfully executed; for, in less than half-an-hour, Mr. Drysdale, laughin' like to split his sides, entered my cell.

"What's this, Mr. Smith?—what's this has happened ye, man?" said he, when the laughing would let him speak. "Ye see what it is to hae a bad name. I tell't ye there was mair than me mistaen aboot this affair. It's a most unlucky name yours."

"Confound the name, sir!" said I. "It's like to be baith the ruin an' the death o' me. But what can I do? I canna get quit o't, an' maun just fecht oot wi't the best way I can."

I wasna at first a'thegither in such a laughin humour as my visitor, yet I couldna help joinin him in the lang run, whan we took twa or three guid roun's o't, an' then proceeded to business. Mr. Drysdale said he wad bail me to ony amount, if that were necessary to my immediate liberation; but proposed that he should, in the first place, call on Hodgson, Brothers, whom he knew intimately, an' state the case to them. This he accordingly did; an', in aboot a quarter o' an hour, returned to me in the jail, wi' ane o' thae gentlemen alang wi' him. Mr. Hodgson expressed the utmost concern for what had happened, an' offered me ony reasonable recompense I might name for the injury an' detention to which I had been subjected. This, however, I declined, but expressed a wish that the messengers wha had apprehended me micht be keel-hauled a bit for the rashness o' their proceedins.

"As to that, Mr. Smith," said Mr. Hodgson, smilin, "I think you had as well 'let a-be for let a-be' there. They have been sadly mauled by you, I understand, and it strikes me to be a drawn battle between you."

"Weel, weel," said I, laughin, "e'en let it be sae, then; but the scoonrils ocht to be mair carefu' wha they lay their hands on."

"They ought, no doubt," said Mr. Hodgson; "but, in this case there was really some excuse for them. Our debtor, whom I dare say you know very well, is a young

man of the name of William Smith—a grocer in your own town, who began business there some months ago. Now, he has failed, as I dare say you know, also—has shut shop—swindled his creditors—and fled the country. This was the fellow we wanted to catch; and, you being from the same place, of the same name, and of, as I take it, about the same age, it is really no great wonder that the men were deceived."

I allowed that it was not; but said it was rather hard that the sins o' a' the Willie Smiths in the country should be visited on my shouthers. "There's no a piece o' villany done by, nor a misfortune happens to a Willie Smith," said I, "but it's fastened on me. It's really hard."

My twa visitors laughingly admitted the hardship o' the case, but advised me to be as patient under't as I could—a wishy-washy aneuch sort o' advice; but it was a', I dare say, they had to offer.

I need hardly say that the jail doors were noo instantly thrown open to me, nor that I lost nae time in availin mysel' o' the liberty to which they invited. The first thing I did on gettin oot was to provide mysel wi' a new coat and hat; for, until this was done, I wasna in a fit state to be seen, an' couldna think o' walkin the streets in the torn-down and blackguard lookin condition in which my captors had left me. Havin, however, improved my outward man a little, and brushed up my face a bit—but on which, notwithstandin a' I could do, there continued to remain some ugly traces o' my late adventure—I thocht I couldna do better, as I had noo a lang idle evenin before me, than ca' on twa or three auld and intimate acquaintances o' our family that resided in Glasgow. In pursuance o' this resolution, I began wi' some decent folks o' the name o' Robertson, distant relations o' our ain, and from whom I had, on the occasion o' former visits, o' which I had made twa or three, met wi' the most kind an' cordial welcome;

and o' this I naturally expected a repetition in the present instance. What was my surprise and mortification, then, whan I fand it quite the reverse—most markedly sae!

"Oh, William, is that you!" said Mrs. Robertson, drily, and wi' a degree o' stiffness and cauldness in her manner which I couldna understan'. "*Will* ye stap in a bit?" she added, hesitatingly and evidently wi' reluctance. Weel, she used to fling her arms aboot me, and pu' me in. But it was noo, "*Will* ye step in?" I did, but sune saw there was something wrang; but what it was I couldna conjecture. I overheard her husband and dochters *refusin* Mrs. Robertson's request to them to come ben and see me. They used to a' rush aboot me, like a torrent. In short, I perceived that I was a very unwelcome visitor, and that a speedy retreat on my part wad be highly approved of. Amongst other hints o' this, was Mrs. Robertson's scarcely speakin three words to me a' the time I sat wi' her, and no makin ony offer o' the sma'est refreshment. Her behaviour to me was a'thegither exceedinly strange and mysterious; but what struck me as maist singular, was her aye speakin o' my faither wi' a compassionatin air. "Puir, puir man!" she wad say; "Gude help us! it's a weary warl' this! Ane canna tell what their weans are to come to. Muckle grief and sorrow, I'm sure, do they bring to parents' hearts." These truths bein obvious and general, I couldna deny them, although I was greatly at a loss to see ony particular occasion for advertin to them at the time. Wearied oot at length wi' Mrs. Robertson's truisms, and disgusted wi' her incivility and uncourteous manner to me, I took up my hat, and decamped, wi' as little ceremony as I had been received. I was, in truth, baith provoked and perplexed by her extraordinary treatment o' me, and couldna at a' conjecture to what it could be owin.

But let the reader fancy, if he can, what was my sur-

prise when I fand mysel' treated in almost precisely the same way in every ither hoose at which I ca'ed subsequently to this. There was, in every instance, the same astonishment expressed at seein me, the same cauldness exhibited, and the same mysterious silence maintained durin my visit. I was perfectly confounded at it; but couldna, of course, ask ony explanation, as there was naething sae palpably oot o' joint as to admit o't. Havin made my roun' o' ca's wi' the success and comfort I hae mentioned, I returned to my quarters, and, orderin a tumbler o' toddy, sat down amongst a heap o' newspapers, to amuse mysel' the best way I could till bedtime. The first paper I took up was a Glasgow one, published that day. I skimmed it ower till I cam to a paragraph wi' the followin takin title—"Desperate Ruffian." This catched my e'e at ance; for I was aye fond o' readin aboot desperate ruffians, and horrible accidents, and atrocious murders, &c. &c. "So," says I to mysel', "here's a feast." And I threw up my legs on the firm on which I was seated, drew the candle nearer me, took a mouthfu' oot o' my tumbler, and made every preparation, in short, for a quiet, deliberate, comfortable read; and this I got, to my heart's content. The paragraph, which began wi' "Desperate Ruffian," went on thus:—

"This morning, a scene, at once one of the most disgraceful and ludicrous which we have witnessed for some time, took place in one of the coach-offices of this city. A fellow of the name of William Smith, a young man of about twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, from ——, who is charged with various acts of swindling, and is well known as a person of infamous character, was apprehended on a fugæ warrant, by our two active criminal officers, Messrs. Rob and Ramage, in the —— coach-office, just as he was about to take out a ticket for Greenock, whither he intended to proceed for the purpose of em-

barking for America with his ill-got gains. The ruffian, on being first apprehended, denied his name; but, finding this not avail him, he violently assaulted the officers in the execution of their duty, and, being a powerful man, it was not until those very deserving men had suffered severely in their persons, and obtained the aid of the bystanders, that he was finally secured. This, however, was ultimately accomplished, when the fellow being securely handcuffed, was conducted to jail, and lodged in one of the strongest cells, where he will, of course, remain until brought to trial. There is a rumour that Smith has been concerned in some late coach robbery; but we have heard no particulars, and cannot vouch for its truth, although, from his appearance, we should suppose him to be perfectly capable of anything."

Weel, guid reader, what do ye think o' that? Wasna that a pretty morsel for me to swallow? It is true that I needna hae felt very uneasy aboot the description o' a character that didna belang to me; but it maun be observed that there was here that mixture o' fact and fiction which, in cases o' rumour, it is sae difficult to separate. Moreover, I was certainly the person spoken o', however erroneously represented; there was nae denyin that. I was mingled up wi' the business, and the very process o' establishin my innocence was certain to gie me a most unpleasant notoriety; and was likely, besides, no to be in every case successful. In short, I fand, tak it ony way I liked, that it couldna be reckoned otherwise than as a most unlucky affair. It was noo, too, that I began to smell a rat regardin the treatment I had met wi' frae the different acquaintances I had ca'ed upon. They had either seen the paragraph which I hae just quoted, or had heard o't. The same belief explained to me the cause o' Mrs. Robertson's reflections on the risin generation o' mankind, and her extraordinary sympathy for my father. There

could be nae doot o't—and thus was the mystery solved. Of this I was still further satisfied, when, on takin up anither Glasgow paper o' the same day, I fand that it also contained an account o' the mornin's affair. The twa paragraphs were, on the whole, pretty much alike in substance; but, in the second ane, there were twa or three incidental circumstances mentioned that added to the interest o' the story considerably.

Such, then, was the readin wi' which I beguiled the time on the evenin o' which I am speakin; an' I leave it to the reader o' thae pages to judge hoo far it was calculated to soothe my previously harassed feelins, an' to afford me the relaxation an' amusement I sought, an' o' which I had sae much need. At first, I resolved on takin every possible public an' private measure that could be commanded to counteract the evil reports, o' ae kind an' anither, under which baith mysel personally an' my family were labourin. I thocht on gaun roun to a' the acquaintances on whom I had just been ca'in, an' explainin to them the real state o' the case; an' then followin up this proceedin wi' ca'in on the editors o' the twa papers in which the injurious statements had appeared, an' requestin, nay, insistin, on their puttin in a true version o' the story, at the same time carefully markin my identity, an' separatin me frae a' discreditable transactions, of every kind, degree, an' character whatsoever. A' this I thocht o' doin, I say; but, on reflection, I changed my mind, an' determined no to gie mysel ony such trouble, but just to let things tak their course, an' trust to my ain conduct, an' the weel-kent respectability o' my faither, for the guid opinion o' the warld. Anent the rumour o' oor bankruptcy, however, I thocht there could be nae harm in puttin in an advertisement or twa, contradictory o't; an' this was accordingly done, in the following brief terms:—

"William Smith, hosier, ——, begs to inform his friends

and the public, that he is not the same person whose name appears in the bankrupt list published in the —— newspaper of the 15th inst. All claims on the advertiser will be paid, on demand, at his shop."

This advertisement I handed into the offices o' twa Glasgow papers that same nicht, an' next mornin saw me safely perched on the tap o' the coach for oor ain place, glad that a' my misadventures were owre, an' that I was soon to be at hame again; for I was sick o' Glasgow—an' the reader will allow no without some reason. The coach on which I was mounted was just aboot to start, the driver had taen the reins in his hand, an' the guard was strugglin to get up the last trunk, whan the waiter o' the inn in which I had been stoppin, an' which was at the head o' a prodigiously lang close, just at the startin-place, cam rinnin up, an' cried, lookin at the same time at the passengers—

"Is there a Mr. Smith here?"

I expected that half-a-dozen at least wad hae owned the name; but, to my surprise, there was no Mr. Smith amang them, but mysel.

"They ca' me Smith, my man—what is it?" said I, wi' a suspicious look; for I noo stood greatly in awe o' my ain name—no bein sure what mischief it micht lead me into.

"There's a gentleman up in the hoose wants to see you directly," said the lad.

"But I canna go till him, man—ye see the coach is just gaun to start," said I.

"Ay, but he says that's o' nae consequence. Ye maun come till him. He has something o' importance to say to ye."

Thinkin it wasna advisable to slight a message o' sae pressin a nature, an' curious to ken wha it was that could be wantin me, an' what he could be wantin me for, I leaped down, resolvin to mak my legs, which were gay an'

lang an' souple anes, save my distance, an' havin nae doubt they wad, critical as the case was. I up the close like a shot, an' into the hoose; but, though *I* was in a hurry, the waiter wha had come for me was in nane. He didna appear for five minutes after; an', as he was the only person wha kent onything aboot a message bein sent after me, I had to wait his return, before I could find oot the person wha wanted me. This, however, he noo effected for me; but not before a good deal mair time was lost. The gentleman who wished to see me was dressin; so I was shewn into a room, while the waiter went to inform him o' my arrival. In a minute or twa after—durin which I was dancin aboot in a fever of impatience, for fear o' losin the coach—the door o' the apartment flew open, an' a laughin, joyous-lookin fellow, with a loud "Aha, Bob!" an' extended hand, rushed in; but he didna rush far. The instant he got his ee fairly on me, he stopped short, an', lookin as grave's a rat, bowed politely, an' said he was exceedingly sorry to perceive that he had committed a gross mistake.

"The fact is, my dear sir," he said, becomin again affable, to reconcile me, I suppose, to the unfortunate blunder, an' speakin wi' great volubility, "my name is Smith, which, I suppose, is yours too, sir. I'm from London. Now, you see, my dear sir, my brother Bob, who lives in Ireland, and whom I haven't seen for some years, was to have met me here last night, agreeably to arrangements made by letter, and we were to have gone this morning, as it were, by the same coach in which you were going, to visit some friends in that part of the country to which it runs. Well, you see, I arrived here only this morning early; but the first thing I did was to inquire if there was a Mr. Smith in the house, and I was distinctly told by the rascal of a waiter that there was no person of that name. Well, what does the fellow do, but come running to my bedside, a little

ago, and tells me that there *had been* a Mr. Smith in the house over night, and that he was at that moment on the top of the —— coach. Well, my dear sir, did not I immediately and very naturally conclude that this Mr. Smith must be my brother! And thus has this unlucky mistake happened. 'Pon my honour, I am most sorry for it—exceedingly sorry, indeed."

Bein naturally o' a very placable disposition, I didna say much in reply to this harangue; but, mutterin something aboot there bein nae help for't, rushed oot o' the hoose, an' down the confounded lang close, as fast as my legs could carry me, and that was pretty fast; but no fast aneuch to catch the coach. It was aff an' awa, mony a lang minute afore.

"Aweel," said I, on discoverin this, "but this does beat cock-fechtin! What, in heaven's name, am I to do wi' this unfortunate patronymic o' mine? It's crossin me wi' mischief o' ae kind or anither at every step. I suppose I'll be hanged in a mistake next. That'll be the end o't. I'll change't, if I leeve to get hame—I'll change't, let what like be the consequence, or I'll hae an *alias* added till't, before waur comes o't; for this 'll never do."

In such reflections as thae did I expend the impatient feelin that the loss o' the coach, an' the recollection o' certain ither sma' incidents, with which the reader is acquainted, had gien rise to. But little guid they did me; an' this I at length fand oot. Sae I just gied a bit smile to mysel, an' made up my mind to wait patiently for the next coach, which started the same nicht, though at a pretty late hour. Late as that hour was, however, it cam roun, an', whan it did, it fand me, withoot havin met wi' ony ither misfortune in the interim, mounted again on the tap o' a coach. This time I was allowed to keep my seat in peace. The coach drove awa, an' me alang wi't; an', in twal hours thereafter, I fand mysel in my faither's hoose, safe and soun', after a' that had happened me.

Shortly after the occurrences which I have just related, my puir faither departed this life, and I, as his only son and heir, succeeded to a' his possessions—stock, lock, and barrel; and I now only wanted a wife to complete my establishment, and fix my position in society. This, however, didna remain lang a desideratum wi' me. A wife I got, and as guid a ane as ever man was blessed wi'; but it was rather a curious sort o' way that I got her. Ae nicht, pretty late, in the summer o' the year 1796, a rather smart rap comes to our door. We were a' in bed—mother, servant lass, and a'; but, on hearin't, I bangs up, on wi' my claes, lichts a cannle, and opens the door. On doing this, then, I sees a porter loaded wi' trunks and bandboxes, and behint him a very pretty, genteel-lookin young woman.

"Here's a frien o' yours come to see you, frae Edinburgh," says the porter, whom I kent weel aneuch; and wi' this the young leddy comes forward, wi' a licht step, and ane o' the prettiest smiles I ever saw; and, says she, haudin oot her haun to me—

"Ye'll no ken me, Mr. Smith, I dare say?"

"No, indeed, mem," says I—"I do not."

"I'm a cousin o' yours," said she—"Margaret Smith, and a dochter o' your uncle William's."

"Frae Edinburgh," said I, takin her cordially by the haun, and leadin her into the parlour.

"The same," said she smilin again; "and I'm just come doun to spend a day or twa wi' ye, if ye hae room for me, and winna think me owre troublesome."

"Room!" said I—"plenty o' room; and, as for trouble, dinna mention that." And I assisted my fair cousin to remove her shawl and other haps. This cousin, I may mention by the way, I had never seen before; and neither had she ever seen ony o' us, although we knew perfectly weel o' each other's existence. But this within parentheses.

Havin seen my pretty cousin—for she was really a bonny-

lookin and modest creature—made so far comfortable, I ran joyfully to my mother, to inform her o' oor acquisition. My mother, who had never seen her either, was delighted wi' the intelligence, and instantly rose to welcome her. The servant was roused oot o' her bed, a little supper prepared, and some delightful hours we spent together. I was charmed wi' my fair cousin; so intelligent, so lively, so sensible, so accomplished—so much o' everything, in short, that was captivatin in a young and beautiful woman. Nor was my mother less delighted wi' her than I was. There were, indeed, some things spoken o' in the course o' conversation between my mother, and oor guest, and I, relatin to family affairs, in which we couldna somehow or other come to a distinct understandin. There was something like cross-purposes between us; and I observed that my fair cousin was extraordinary ignorant o' a' matters concerning us, and o' the circumstances o' a number o' oor mutual relations. But this neither my mother nor I thought much o', either. It was just sae like a bit lively thochtless lassie, wha couldna be expected to hae either the genealogy of a' her friends, or their particular callins or residences, at her finger ends. However, as I said before, we spent a pleasant evening thegither; and this followed by eight as pleasant days, durin which time our fair guest continued to make rapid progress in the affections o' baith my mother and me; although, of course, the regard she excited was somewhat different in its nature in the twa cases. In mine it was love—in my mother's esteem. But a' this was to hae a sudden and curious termination. At the end o' the eight days above alluded to, happenin to tak up a newspaper, I was attracted by an advertisement bearing the following highly interesting title—"Young Lady Missing." I read on, and found, to my amazement, that the young lady was no other than my fair cousin. The notice stated, that she had gone down to ——, to visit

some relations; had left Edinburgh, by the —— coach, on the mornin of the 10th, and had been safely set down at ——; but that her relations there had seen nothing of her, and that no trace of her could since be found. The advertisement concluded by offering a handsome reward to any one who could give any such information as might lead to a discovery of the young lady, either to Mr. William Smith, haberdasher, ——, or to Mr. William Smith, No. 19, Lavender Street, Edinburgh.

Here, then, was a queer business. But, bein now somewhat accustomed to thae things, I was at nae loss to discover the meanin o't. The young lady wasna my cousin at a'—she had come to the wrang shop. She was a niece o' Willie Smith the haberdasher's—and there was the mystery solved at ance. It turned oot precisely sae. There was an awfu kick-up, and an awfu rejoicin, and shakin o' hands, and writin o' letters, and sae forth, after I had announced to the different parties how the matter stood, and brocht them thegither. But I wasna gaun to lose my fair cousin this way. I followed her to Willie Smith's, whar I was a welcome aneuch guest, and availed mysel to the full o' the advantages which a curious chance had thrown in my way, by eventually makin her my wife; and, as I said before, a most admirable one she made, and still maks, as she is sittin by my elbow at this present writin.

Noo, guid reader, sae far hae I brocht the story o' my life, or perhaps, rather o' my unfortunate name, (no a'thegither so unfortunate either, since it helped me to sic a wife,) and I maun stop; but it's for want o' room, and, I assure you, no for want o' matter. What I hae tell't ye is no a tithe o' the sufferings I hae endured through this unhappy patronymic o' mine. In truth, it was but the beginnin o' them. The rest I may relate to ye on some future day. In the meantime, guid reader, I bid ye fareweel, wi' a sincere houp that yer name's no Willie Smith.

# THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.

## PHEBE FORTUNE.

I HAVE now been upwards of forty years minister of the parish of C——. Soon after I became minister, I stumbled one morning upon a small parcel lying in a turnip field adjoining the manse. It appeared to me at first to be a large hedgehog; but, upon further investigation, I found that it was a seemingly new-born infant, wrapt carefully up in warm flannel, and dressed in clothes which indicated anything but extreme poverty. There was a kirk-road through the turnip field—my wonted passage to my glebe land every morning; and the infant had manifestly been deposited with a reference to my habits. I could not possibly miss seeing it—it lay completely across my path—a road almost untrod by anybody save myself.

As I happened to have a young, and a pretty large—or, in other phrase, small—family of my own, I hesitated at first how to proceed; but a moment's reflection taught me the necessity of acting rather than of thinking; and I gathered up the little innocent in my arms, and hastened back, with all possible speed, to the manse. The little hands of the helpless existence were moving backwards and forwards, up and down; and its lips plainly indicated a desire for its natural beverage.

"Bless me!" said my dear wife, as I entered; "bless me, my dear, what's that you are bringing us?"

"It's a child," said I; "an infant—beautiful as day—only look at it."

"None of your nonsense," said spousie, looking some-

what archly in my face. "I'm sure, ye ken, we hae mae weans than we hae meat for already. But where in all the world did you pick up this sweet little darling?"—for, by this time, my wife had opened the flannel coverings, and examined the features of the young stranger carefully.

My second youngest girl, about four years of age, had joined us, and, falling down on her knees, kissed the foundling's cheeks all over. In fact, the news spread all over the manse in less than no time; and I had my two eldest boys—then preparing for school—my eldest daughter, and the two maid-servants, all tumbling into the parlour in a world of amazement. My wife, however, having recovered from her first surprise and burst of natural affection, began, very naturally, to speculate about the parentage of the uninvited visitant. She examined its dress; and, amongst other discoveries, found a piece of paper attached to the body of the frock, inscribed with these words, in a plain printed hand—"I am not what I seem. My name is Phebe." On searching a little more particularly, a hundred-pound note was found stitched into a small purse or bag, suspended from the infant's neck. We were all amazement. My wife was all at once persuaded that the infant must be the offspring of some lady of high quality, and that, by keeping her in our family, we should be absolutely enriched by presents of hundred-pound notes every other morning. She seemed to look upon poor Phebe as the philosopher's stone, and thought that gold would, in future, be as plentiful in our house as brass coinage had hitherto been. But who could be the mother of this pretty, sweet, dear, darling, lovely child? Could it be—and she whispered me knowingly in the ear; but I shook my head, and looked equally knowing. Could it be Lady M——? I looked incredulity, and my wife pushed her speculations no further. By this time

my oldest daughter had arranged Phebe's dress, and made all snug; and the poor little infant gave audible intimation of a desire for food. What was to be done? This question occupied us for about a quarter of an hour, when we at last recollected that Lord C——'s gardener's wife had yesterday buried her infant. She was immediately sent for, and, having no children of her own, agreed, after some persuasion and the promise of a handsome reward, to suckle poor Phebe. It was, indeed, beautifully interesting to observe how Phebe's little hands wandered over the source of her sustenance, and seemed to say, as plainly as hands could speak it, "I have you now, and will not part with you again." Phebe grew—opened her sweet blue eyes—smiled—and won all hearts in the course of a month. But she was still a heathen, or, in other words, unbaptised; and, after consulting the session, whom I advertised of all the circumstances, it was agreed that the gardener's wife should take the vows, and name the child. We all wept at the christening; there was something so unusual and overpowering, so mysterious and exciting, in the whole transaction. My wife suggested that she should be called "Phebe Monday," that being the day on which she was found; but, somehow or other, I disliked the combination of sounds exceedingly; and at last, at the suggestion of the nurse-mother, we affixed Fortune to her Christian designation; and, after the ceremony, which was performed in the gardener's house, we drank a glass of ginger wine to the health and long life of little Phebe Fortune, the foundling. Through the kindness of Lord C——, I had the privilege of walking when I chose in his extensive gardens and pleasure-grounds, which were in my parish, and adjoining to the manse; and it was on one of the smooth-rolled grass walks of this garden that I conducted little Phebe's first steps, when she put down her little foot for the first time, and stood almost erect on the grass. Oh, how the

little doll screamed and chuckled as she tumbled over and rolled about; ever and anon stretching out her little hand, and asking, as it were, my assistance in aiding her inexperience and weakness. However, "*Tentando fimus fabri*," by effort, frequently repeated, success is at last secured; and Phebe at last flew off from me like an arrow, and, like an arrow, too, alighted head foremost on the soft sward. Phebe won all hearts when she began to syllable people's names. Me she called "minny-man;" my wife, "minny-man-minny;" and her own nurse, "mother, ma, ma, bonny ma! guid ma!" Year rolled on after year, and little Phebe was the talk of all the country round. People passing on the highroad stopped and spoke to her. Phebe used often to visit the manse, and to play with my youngest daughter, only a few months younger than herself, whilst I have often sat in my elbow chair, called in the family "Snug," and said to myself, "I am sure I cannot tell which of these children I am most attached to." All the features and properties of little Phebe were aristocratic: beautiful feet and anckles; small, little plump hands, and finely-tapered fingers; an eye of the purest water and the most noble expression, beaming through a curtain of deep blue, under a canopy of the finest auburn; a brow, nose, lips, and chin, all exquisitely formed and proportioned. No child in the neighbourhood could be compared with Phebe. Even my wife, prejudiced as she naturally was in favour of her own offspring, used sometimes to say—"Our Jessie looks well enough; but that child Phebe is a pear of another tree." To this I readily assented, as I had no inclination to hint either the identity of the tree or the affinity of the fruit.

One day I was walking with little Phebe (who had now attained her seventh year, and exhausted the last penny of the hundred pounds) in my own little garden—we were quite alone, when the girl all at once stopped her playful-

ness (for she was now a very lark), and, taking a hold of my hand, pulled me gently, nothing loath, into an adjoining little arbour: after I was seated, and Phebe had taken her wonted station betwixt my knees, reserving either knee for future convenience, the little angel looked up in my face so innocently and so sweetly, saying—

"You are Jessie's pa, are not you?"

"Yes," I replied, "my dear child, I am."

"But where is my pa? have I no pa? Gardener says you know all about it."

I regretted exceedingly that anything should have passed betwixt the foster-parents and their charge upon the subject; but, since it was so, I judged it best at once to tell the child the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Phebe looked me most intently in the face as I proceeded; and when I had finished by kissing her, and assuring her that whilst I lived she should never want a pa, the poor dear burst into tears, exclaiming, in an accent of complete misery—

"No pa! no ma! Everybody has pa's and ma's but Phebe. Dear, dear minny"—a term by which she still addressed me—"can you not tell me anything about my own ma?"

I assured her that I could not, having not the least information on the subject.

"Maybe she's dead"—and here again her feelings overcame her, and she laid her head on my knee, with all its luxuriant tresses; and I felt the tears warm on my person.

From this day Phebe Fortune became a different child. Even at an early age she had learned to think; but had been hitherto very averse to learning, or school education. She was henceforth diligent and attentive, making rapid progress in reading, writing, and accounts. Her foster-mother taught her sewing; and little Phebe, by the time

she was eleven years old, was quite accomplished in all the necessary and useful parts of a female education. But, alas! the instability of human affairs!—poor Phebe caught a fever, which she communicated to her foster-mother, and which occasioned *her* death in a few weeks, whilst Phebe slowly recovered. The gardener's heart was broken—he had long been subject to occasional fits of low spirits. Whether from accident or not was never fully ascertained, nor even closely investigated; but he was found one morning drowned, in a pond of water which ornamented the east corner of the garden ground. As my own family was numerous, and my stipend limited, I behoved to endeavour to place Phebe in some way of doing for herself—still hoping, however, that time ere long would withdraw the veil, and discover the sunny side of Phebe Fortune's history. Seldom did a carriage pass the manse by the king's highway, that my wife did not conjecture that it might perhaps stop at the bottom of the avenue, and emit a fine lady, with fine manners and a genteel tongue, to claim our now highly interesting ward. But the perverse carriages persevered in rolling rapidly along, till at last, one fine sunny afternoon, one did actually stop, and out stepped the lady, middle-aged, splendidly attired, and advanced towards our habitation. My wife's heart was at her mouth—she ran through the house in a few seconds, from bottom to top, had Phebe put into her best attire, and all diligence served upon the dusting and cleaning of carpets and chairs. The lady appeared; but, to my wife's great disappointment, proved to be no other than an old pupil of my own, who, in passing, had heard of my residence, and wished kindly to renew an acquaintance interrupted by, perhaps, not less than thirty years. Still my wife would not give up the notion that Phebe resembled Lady D—— exceedingly, and that Lady D—— seemed to eye her with more complacency than any of the rest of the children. In the

course of conversation, I had occasion to acknowledge that the beautiful being whom Lady D—— admired above all the rest of my fine family was a foundling. This led to a detail of the whole matter; and Lady D——, having conversed for a little with Phebe, took such a liking to the girl that she proposed having her continually about her person, as a kind of superior waiting-maid, half menial and half companion, and to remove her from under our roof on the instant. Although this was an offer too good and too opportune to be negatived, yet we could not think of parting with our darling Phebe on so short a warning; and, after some remonstrances on both sides, it was agreed that the carriage should be sent for Phebe and me on a future day, which was named, and that I should spend a few days with my old pupil, in her recently acquired and lately inhabited mansion-house of Rosehall, little more than thirty miles distant. The interval which took place betwixt this proposal and its accomplishment was spent in needlework and other little feminine preparations; and, as the day approached, we all felt as if we could have wished that we had rejected the proposal with disdain. Phebe was often seen in tears—but she was all resignation, and rejoiced that I was to accompany her, and see her fairly entered. At last the dreadful carriage, with its four horses, came into view at the foot of our avenue (which, though possessed of a sufficiently imposing appellation, was nothing more nor less than a very bad and nearly impassable cart road), and we all began our march to meet the vehicle. Promises of future visits were spoken of, and made, and solemnly sworn to—a home, house, or manse was declared to Phebe at all times; but, particularly, should she find herself unhappy in her new position; and it was with difficulty that I got the now truly lovely, and all but woman, Phebe, torn from the grasp and cling of my daughters, and handed into the splendid and richly-lined chariot.

In the family of Lady D——, Phebe's duties were at once easy and agreeable. She waited upon her mistress's bell in the morning, and was soon taught how to assist at the toilet. During the day, she either read aloud, whilst her Ladyship reposed after her forenoon's walk or drive, or looked after the health and comfort of two favourite lap-dogs. At night, again, she renewed her closet assistance, reading aloud some paragraph which she had marked in a newspaper, and detailing such little domestic incidents as came within the range of her somewhat limited sphere of observation. Lord D—— was much engaged in public business (being lord-lieutenant of the county), and in carrying on some agricultural speculations by which he was much engrossed. There were two young Honourables of the fair sex, and an only son—then attending his studies at Oxford—children of the family. Phebe Fortune was now fifteen, and seemed to increase in loveliness, and the most kindly, intelligent expression of countenance, daily. Her eyes were heaven's own *blue*—

> "The little halcyon's azure plume
> Was never half so blue."

And then, when she spoke or smiled, her countenance was altogether overpowering; as well might you have attempted to look steadfastly upon the sun in his midday radiance. Of *her* far more truly and forcibly might it have been said or sung, than of the "Lassie wi' the Lint-white Locks"—

> "She talked, she smiled, my heart she wiled,
> She charmed my soul, I wat na hoo;
> But aye the stound, the deadly wound,
> Cam frae her een sae bonny blue."

Phebe, by my own arrangement with Lady D——, was not exposed to any intimacy with the servants, male or female. She had her own apartment and table; and all the menial duties were performed to her as regularly as

to any branch of the family. It was soon after my return from a three weeks' visit at Rosehall, that I received the following letter from Phebe. I got it at the post-office, unknown to any of my family; and I kept it, as was my custom when I had anything agreeable to communicate, till after dinner. The board having been cleared, and a tumbler of warm toddy made, my wife's single glass having been filled out, and my daughters having turned them all ear, I proceeded to read the following maiden epistle of Phebe Fortune:—

"Dear, dear Papa, and ever dear Mamma, and all my own Sisters dear—I am happy here; Lady D—— is so kind to me; and Lord D—— looks very kind too, though he has not spoken to me yet—but then you see he is always engaged; and the honourable young ladies—but I do not think they are quite so kind; and they are so pretty too, and so happy looking! Oh, I wish they would like me! If they would only speak to me now and then as they pass me on the stair; but they only stop and laugh to one another, and then they toss their heads; and I can hear them say something about 'upsetting,' and 'mamma's whim, and papa's absurdity.' I'm sure—I'm sure, my dear parents—(for, alas! I have none other, though I dream sometimes that I have, and I feel so happy and delighted, that I always awake crying)—but what was I going to say?—you know I never wrote any letters before, and you will excuse this I know—I could not, I am sure, speak of whim or absurdity in regard to you, my dear benefactors. But I will try never to mind it. Lady D—— is so very kind. I sometimes go out with the little dogs, Poodle and Clara; they are such dear pets, I could take them, and do often take them to my bosom. And then, the other day, when I was sitting playing with Clara and Poodle, beneath the elm tree, the gardener's son

passed me, and—no he did not pass, that is to say not all at once—but he stopped, and asked me to take a flower, which he had pulled for me, which I did, and then he offered to show me through the hot-houses, but I did not go. My dear mamma, do you think I should have gone? And then he left me; but yesterday a little boy gave me the following letter. And all that the letter contains is this—

"If you love me as I love thee,
What a loving couple we shall be!"

Love him!—oh, no—no—no—I will never, never walk that way again—I will never, never speak to him more. I love you, my own dear papa, and mamma, and my sisters, and Lady D——, and the two little dear doggies; but I never could love Donald M'Naughton; not but that he is good-looking, too, and young, and respected in the family; but he never can be a father or mother to me you know, as you have been. Oh! do write me soon, soon—and tell me all about the garden, and the ash-tree, and the arbour, and the flowers, and old Neptune, your favourite, and everything. I remain, most affectionately, yours,

PHEBE FORTUNE.

"P.S.—But Fortune is not my name. Oh, that I had a name worth writing!—such a name as Lindsay, Crawford, Hamilton, Douglas. Oh! how beautifully Phebe Douglas would look on paper, and sound in one's ear!"

Such was the state of Phebe's mind and feelings at that interesting period of life when the female is in the transition from the mere girl to the real woman; and it was about this very period, when all the feelings are peculiarly alive to each fine impulse, that it fell to Phebe's lot to be severely tried. Day after day, and week after week, Lady

D—— missed some valuable article of dress, some Flanders lace, some costly trinket, a ring it might be, or a bracelet. At last Lady D—— thought it proper to inform her lord of the fact, who, upon obtaining a search warrant unknown to any one save his lady, had the trunks of the whole household establishment strictly searched. Poor Phebe's little chest, "wi' her a' int," discovered, to the amazement of all, the whole lot of the missing articles. Lady D—— looked as if she had been suddenly struck with lightning; whilst poor Phebe regarded the whole as a jest, a method adopted by her lady, or his lordship, to try her character and firmness. She absolutely laughed at the denouement, and seemed altogether unconcerned about the matter. This, to his lordship in particular, appeared to be a confirmation of guilt; and he immediately ordered her person to be secured, evidence of her guilt to be made out, and a criminal trial to be instituted. When the full truth dawned upon poor Phebe, she sat as one would do who is vainly endeavouring to recollect something which has escaped his memory. Her colour left her; she was pale as Parian marble; her eyes became dim, and her ears sang; she fainted; and it was not till after great and repeated exertion that she was recovered, through the usual painful steps, to a perception of the outward world. She looked wildly around her. Lady D—— was standing with her handkerchief at her eyes—she had wept aloud.

"O Phebe," said her ladyship, "are you guilty of this?"

Phebe repeated the word "guilty" twice, looked wildly on Lady D——'s eyes, and then, in an unsettled and alarmed manner, all round the room.

"Guilty!" she repeated—"Guilty of what? Who is guilty? It is not he. I am sure he could not be guilty. Oh, no—no—no—he is my father, my friend, my protector, my minny, my dear, dear minny—he could not do it! he never did it! You are all wrong!—and my poor, poor,

head, is odd—odd—odd." Thus saying, she clasped her forehead in a frenzied manner, and nature again came to her relief in a second pause of insensibility, from which she only recovered to indicate that her remaining faculties had seemingly left her. Time, however, gradually awakened her to a perception of the sad reality; and it was from a chamber in the castle, to which she was confined, that she wrote the following letter to her original and kind protector:—

"Oh, my ever dear friend—Your Phebe is accused of—I cannot write it, I cannot bear to look at the horrid word—of stealing. Oh, that you had let me lie where the wickedness of an unknown parent exposed my helplessness to the random tread of the passenger! Oh, come and see me; I grow positively confused; your Phebe is imprisoned in her own chamber; but my poor head is swimming again—there—there—I see everybody whirling about on the chimney tops—there they go—there they go! I can only see to write

Phebe."

There was no date to this sad scrawl; but it needed none; for in twenty-four hours after it had arrived at the manse, I had set out on my way to Rosehall. The meeting betwixt the foster-father and the child was, of course, exceedingly affecting. Investigations into the whole matter were renewed; but no other way could be thought of for accounting for the presence of the missing property in Phebe's locked trunk, than the supposition which implied her guilt.

"I could stake my life, my salvation," said I, "on Phebe's innocence." But Lord D—— doubted; his Lady could not have believed it possible; but still there were, she said, similar cases on record—one, quite in point, had

just occurred in her neighbourhood, where the guilty party had, up to the dishonest act, borne a very high character. The circuit trial came on in about ten days, and Phebe, accompanied by the minister, and the best legal advice, was seated at the bar on her trial. Witnesses were examined, who swore that they saw the trunk opened, and Lady D——'s property discovered; others, particularly the lady's maid, swore that she all along suspected Phebe, from seeing her always shutting, and often locking her door inside. She once looked through the key-hole, and saw Phebe busied with her trunk; she saw something in her hand that sparkled. Phebe had no exculpatory evidence but her simple averment that she knew not how the articles came there—she never brought them. The king's advocate having restricted the sentence, and the jury having brought in unanimously a verdict of guilty, the judge was on the point of pronouncing a sentence of banishment, when the poor pannel fainted. It was a most affecting scene to hear the sentence of banishment pronounced over a piece of insensate clay. All wept—even the judge; and Phebe was carried out of court, apparently quite dead.

Next morning I was found sitting with a cheerful countenance by Phebe's couch, in the prison-house. I had good news I said to impart to her:—

"The girl who has been the principal witness against you, has been suddenly seized, during the night, with an excruciating and evidently fatal disease; in the agonies of death she has confessed to me, and in the presence of Lady D—— too, that she had sworn to a lie; that she herself with her own hand, and by means of a false key, placed the articles—which she had originally stolen with the view of retaining them—in your chest. This she had done from jealousy, having observed that her lover, the gardener's son, had fixed his affections upon you."

All this was solemnly attested in the presence of witnesses, and all this was conveyed in a suitable manner to the judge; in consequence of which, and through the usual preliminary steps, Phebe was set free, and again admitted into the full confidence and the friendship of the family.

It so happened, that a young nobleman had witnessed the whole trial from the bench, and had taken an exceeding interest in Phebe, whose beautiful and modest demeanour and countenance not even despair could entirely disfigure. Having made some inquiries respecting her history, he was led to make more, and discovered considerable emotion when I unfolded the whole truth to him. Still he said nothing, but took his departure, with many thanks for the information given. In a few days, this same young nobleman, of remarkably fine features, and pleasing expression, returned to the Manse of C——, having an elderly gentleman in the carriage along with him. He requested a private interview with me; and, in the presence of his friend, I travelled over again the whole particulars of the foundling's story, comparing dates, and investigating seeming inconsistencies. At last, he declared, at once, and in tears of amazement and joy—"Phebe Fortune is my own—my only *sister!*" I looked incredulous, and almost hinted at insanity; but the young nobleman still persevered in his averment. His father, a nobleman of high rank, far south of the Tweed, in order to gratify a passion which had driven him almost mad, had consented to *pretend* to marry privately (his own father being still alive, and set upon his son's marrying his cousin the Honourable Miss D——), a most beautiful girl, the daughter of a Chester yeoman of high respectability. The lady was removed from her native home, and lodged in a remote quarter of the town of Liverpool. A report was fabricated, and spread abroad by means of the newspapers, that a lady, who was minutely described, had jumped one

evening into a boat, and, being rowed, at her request, to some distance, had plunged into the sea, and perished. Phebe's parents investigated the matter, as far as the boatman's evidence was concerned, and were satisfied from his description of her person, that their dear Phebe, who, for some time past, had appeared troubled and even dispirited, had adopted suicide as a refuge from all her earthly cares. Phebe and the Honourable Mr. L—— met frequently in secret, and a daughter was the fruit of their interviews. This daughter the young nobleman proposed to put out to nurse; but, in reality, to put beyond the reach of being ever recognised as his. A confidential person was obtained, herself a Scotchwoman, to carry the child into Fife, and there to expose it, under the circumstances and with the provision already mentioned. This person chanced to be a parishioner of mine, and the consequences were as already described. Having executed her task, she married a soldier, with whom she soon after sailed for our West India settlements. Phebe's second birth proved to be a male; and the boy was about to be removed in a similar manner from the mother, when she absconded from her now tyrannical husband, and her concealed home, refusing to be again separated from her own offspring. Her parents, who had regarded her as dead, were sufficiently surprised, but by no means gratified, when Phebe appeared again with the child in her arms. In the meantime, Lord L—— died, and the Honourable youth became Baron L—— of Houston-hope. Poor Phebe's averment respecting her previous marriage was regarded, even by her parents, as somewhat suspicious; and not being able to command the testimony of the person who married them, she was compelled to remain silent. The effort, however, soon cost her her life; and the boy, by his acknowledged father's interest, was placed in the army, and sent out to the West Indies. There he accidentally met with the woman his

mother had often mentioned to him, who had carried off his sister. She confessed the whole truth to him; and, after a year or two, they both returned in the same ship to England. By this time, the noble husband being free to dispose of his hand in matrimony, proposed, not for his cousin, as his father had contemplated, but for the daughter of an exceedingly wealthy Liverpool merchant. This person happened to be the near relative of him who had called what was deemed only a pretended priest to perform the marriage ceremony; and, seeing the danger which his relative would run, should he give away his daughter, in hopes of her offspring heiring the title and property, when a legitimate heir probably existed, he divulged the secret to his relations. This naturally led to a denouement; and Lord L—— being thus frustrated in his object, and being at the same time a person governed more by passion than reason, shot the person who had deceived him through the arm; and then, thinking that he had committed murder, he blew out his own brains.

The brother of Phebe, after a long and complicated legal investigation, was declared and served heir to the title and vast property. Taking the clergyman who had married his mother along with him, he had gone into Scotland, partly to visit his uncle, Lord D——, and partly, by the assistance of the priest and the Scotchwoman, to discover what had become of his sister. Her likeness to himself and his mother had struck him forcibly in court, and the investigation and discovery followed.

To describe the interview betwixt the brother and sister is far beyond my power. Every heart will appreciate it more than ink and paper can possibly express. It was a pure—a long—a terrible embrace; but it spoke volumes, heart met heart, and lips were glued to lips, till breathing became inconvenient. All parties rejoiced. Phebe, on her way south along with her brother, spent a whole day

at the Manse. I was absolutely insane with joy; and my wife told me privately—"My dear, our fortune is made; we'll get all our boys out to India now." My daughters, too, kissed and fondled their sister, "and all went merry as a marriage bell."

"How sweet is pleasure after pain!"

The contrast of Phebe's fortune greatly enhanced the enjoyment; and, in the space of a few short months, Phebe Fortune was married to her own cousin, the son of Lord and Lady D——, her kind protectors. The old couple are still alive; but their children, with a numerous offspring, live upon one of their estates in Ayrshire, and exhibit to all around them the blessings which a humane and generous aristocracy may disseminate amidst neighbours and dependents. The brother of Phebe, Lord L——, still remains a bachelor; but has proved to his mother's relatives, as well as to the parties who befriended her by deceiving his dishonourable parent, that he feels the obligation, and rewards it, by making them one way or another entirely independent.

I go my weekly rounds amongst those now happy families, and have experienced the truth of my wife's prophecy; for both my boys are advantageously disposed of, and, on the marriage of my eldest daughter, Phebe Fortune made her a present of one thousand pounds.

# THE ROYAL BRIDAL;

OR,

## THE KING MAY COME IN THE CADGER'S WAY.

Early in July, in the year of grace 1503, Lamberton Moor presented a proud and right noble spectacle. Upon it was outspread a city of pavilions, some of them covered with cloth of the gorgeous purple and glowing crimson, and decorated with ornaments of gold and silver. To and fro, upon brave steeds, richly caparisoned, rode a hundred lords and their followers, with many a score of gay and gallant knights and their attendant gentlemen. Fair ladies, too, the loveliest and the noblest in the land, were there. The sounds of music from many instruments rolled over the heath. The lance gleamed, and the claymore flashed, and war-steeds neighed, as the notes of the bugle rang loud for the tournament. It seemed as if the genius of chivalry had fixed its court upon the heath.

It may be meet, however, that we say a word or two concerning Lamberton, for though, now-a-days, it may lack the notoriety of Gretna in the annals of matrimony, and though its "*run of business*" may be of a humbler character, there was a time when it could boast of prouder visitors than ever graced the Gretna blacksmith's temple. To the reader, therefore, who is unacquainted with our eastern Borders, it may be necessary to say, that, at the northern boundary of the lands appertaining to the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and about three miles, a furlong, and few odd yards from that oft-recorded good town, a dry stone wall,

some thirty inches in height, runs from the lofty and perpendicular sea-banks, over a portion of what may be termed the fag-end of Lammermoor, and now forming a separation between the laws of Scotland and the jurisdiction of the said good town; and on crossing to the northern side of this humble but important stone wall, you stand on the lands of Lamberton. Rather more than a stone-throw from the sea, the great north road between London and Edinburgh forms a gap in the wall aforesaid, or rather "dyke;" and there, on either side of the road, stands a low house, in which Hymen's high priests are ever ready to make one flesh of their worshippers. About a quarter of a mile north of these, may still be traced something of the ruins of the kirk, where the princess of England became the bride of the Scottish king, and the first link of the golden chain of UNION, which eventually clasped the two nations in one, may be said to have been formed.

The gay and gallant company were assembled on Lamberton, for within the walls of its kirk, the young, ardent, and chivalrous James IV. of Scotland was to receive the hand of his fair bride, Margaret of England, whom Dunbar describes as a

"Fresche rose, of cullor reid and white."

The wild heath presented all the splendour of a court, and the amusements of a crowded city. Upon it were thousands of spectators, who had come to witness the royal exhibitions, and the first durable bond of amity between two rival nations. Some crowded to behold the tourneyings of the knights with sword, spear, and battle-axe; others to witness the representation of plays, written "expressly for the occasion;" while a third party were delighted with the grotesque figures and positions of the morris-dancers; and a fourth joined in, or were spectators of, the humbler athletic exercises of wrestling, leaping, putting the stone, and throwing the hammer.

All, too, were anxious to see the young king, whose courage and generosity were the theme of minstrels, and of whom one sayeth—

> "And ye Christian princes, whosoever ye be,
> If ye be destitute of a noble captayne,
> Take James of Scotland for his audacitie
> And proved manhood, if ye will laud attayne."

But the young monarch was as remarkable for his gallantry and eccentricity, as for his generosity and courage; and no one seemed able to tell whether or not he lodged in the magnificent pavilion over which the royal standard of Scotland waved, or whether he intended to welcome his royal bride by proxy.

But our story requires that, for a time, we leave princes, knights, and tournaments, and notice humbler personages, and more homely amusements. At a distance from the pavilion, the tourneyings, the music, the plays, and other exhibitions, was a crowd composed of some seven or eight hundred peasantry engaged in and witnessing the athletic games of the Borders. Near these were a number of humbler booths, in which the spectators and competitors might regale themselves with the spirits and tippeny then in use.

Amongst the competitors was one called Meikle Robin, or Robin Meikle. He was strength personified. His stature exceeded six feet; his shoulders were broad, his chest round, his limbs well and strongly put together. He was a man of prodigious bone and sinews. At throwing the hammer, at putting the stone, no man could stand before him. He distanced all who came against him, and, while he did so, he seemed to put forth not half his strength, while his skill appeared equal to the power of his arm.

Now, amongst the spectators of the sports, there stood one who was known for many miles around by the appellation of *Strong Andrew*. He was not so tall, by three inches, as the conqueror of the day; nor could he measure

with him either across the shoulders or around the chest; and, in fact, he was rather a thin man than otherwise, nor did he appear a powerful one—but his bones were well set. His sinews were all strength—they were not encumbered with flesh. He was as much a model of activity and suppleness, as Meikle Robin was of bodily power. Now, Andrew was a native of Eyemouth; he was about three and thirty years of age, and he united in his person the callings of a fisherman and cadger; or, in other words, Andrew, being without mother, sister, wife, or servant, sold himself the fish which he had caught. His domestic establishment consisted of a very large and a very wise water-dog, and a small pony; and with the last-mentioned animal he carried his fish around the country. For several days, and on the day in question, he had brought his store for sale to the camps or pavilions at Lamberton, where he had found a ready and an excellent market. There, as Andrew stood and witnessed the championship of Meikle Robin, his blood boiled within him; and, "Oh," thought he, "but if I had onybody that I could trust to take care o' the Galloway and my jacket, *and the siller*, but I wad take the conceit oot o' ye, big as ye are."

Andrew possessed his country's courage and its caution in equal proportions; and, like a wise man, he did not choose to trust his money by risking it to strangers. In such a motley company it would not be safe to do so now a-days; but it would have been much less so then. For, at that time, and especially on the Borders, the law of *mine* and *thine* was still imperfectly understood. But Andrew's determination to humble the champion was well-nigh overcoming his caution, when the former again stepped into the ring, and cast off his jacket for a wrestling bout. He stood looking round him for a minute; and it was evident that every one was afraid to enter the lists against him. Andrew could endure it no longer; and he was

saying—"Will ony person tak charge o' my Gallowway?"——

When a young man of middle stature, and whose dress bespoke him to be a domestic of one of the noblemen who had come to witness the royal festival, and grace it with their presence, entered the lists. Without even throwing off his bonnet, he stretched out his arms to encounter the champion, who met him—somewhat after the fashion that Goliath met David—with contempt. But the first grasp of the stranger, as he seized his arms above the elbows, instead of throwing them round his waist (as was, and is the unscientific practice of the Borders), informed Robin that he had no common customer to deal with. Robin, as a wrestler, in a great measure trusted to mere strength and tripping. He knew nothing of turning an antagonist from his centre of gravity by a well-timed and well-directed touch. He therefore threw his arms around the back of his opponent (so far as the grasp which the other had got of them would permit), with the intention of giving him a "Hawick hug," but he found he could not join his hands together so as to effect his purpose, and his strength could not accomplish it. Ignorant of his antagonist's mode of attack, he had allowed him an advantage over him; and when he endeavoured to gain it by tripping his heels, the other suddenly changed his feet, favoured Robin with a "Devonian kick," and suddenly dashing his bended knee against his person, Robin lost his footing, and fell upon his back, with the stranger above him.

The spectators shouted; and Andrew, mounting his pony, exclaimed aloud—

"Weel dune, stranger—I'm as glad as though I had gotten a gowden coin."

Now, it is but justice to Andrew to say that he had repeatedly defeated Meikle Robin, both at wrestling, cud-

gel-playing, and every athletic exercise; but I shall give the reader an account of his having done so on one occasion in his own words, as it is necessary for the forwarding of our narrative.

Andrew went to Lamberton with his fish on the following day, and again he found a profitable market; and some words had again passed between him and Meikle Robin; but, as he was returning home, he overtook the stranger by whom Robin had been defeated.

"Losh, man!" said Andrew, pulling up his pony, "is this ye? I canna tell ye hoo glad I am to see ye, for I've dune naething but thocht o' ye ever since yesterday, when I saw ye tak the brag oot o' Meikle Robin, just as easily as I would bend a willy-wand. Now, I hope, sir, although ye are a stranger, ye no think ill o' my familiarity?"

"Think ill, comrade," said the other, "why should I do so?"

"Why, I watna," said Andrew, "but there seems to be sae mony kind o' butterflies getting about the court now, wi' their frills and their gold-laced jackets, from what I can judge o' their appearance for some days past on the Moor, that I wasna sure but it might be like-master like-man wi' ye, and I was uncertain how to speak to ye. I didna ken but that, in some things, ye might imitate your superiors, and treat a cadger body as though they hadna been o' the same flesh an blood wi' yoursel."

The stranger laughed, and repeated the adage—

"Why—the king may come in the cadger's way."

"Very true, sir," said Andrew, "and may find him a man mair like himsel than he imagines. But, sir, what I was gaun to say to you—and it is connected wi' your defeating o' Meikle Robin yesterday—(at least I wish to make it connected wi' it). Weel, just five days syne, I was at Lamberton—it was the very day after the royal party arrived—and Robin was there. Perhaps you was

there yoursel; but the tents were there, and the games, and the shows, and everything was going on just the same as ye saw them yesterday. But, as I was telling ye, Meikle Robin was there. Now, he gets the brag o' being the best cudgel-player, putter, and wrestler, in a' Berwickshire—and, between you and I, that is a character that I didna like to hear gaun past mysel. However, as I was saying, on the day after the royal party had come to the Moor, and the games were begun, he had the ball fairly at his foot, and fient a ane durst tak him up ava. He was terribly insulting in the pride o' his victoriousness, and, in order to humble him, some were running frae tent to tent to look for Strong Andrew—(that is me, ye observe; for they ca' me that as a sort o' nickname—though for what reason I know not). At last they got me. I had had a quegh or twa, and I was gay weel on—(for I never in my born days had had such a market for my fish; indeed, I got whatever I asked, and I was wishing in my heart that the king's marriage party would stop at Lammerton Moor for a twelvemonth)—but, though I had a drappie ower the score, Robin was as sober as a judge; for, plague tak him! he kenned what he was doing—he was ower cunnin to drink, and laid himsel out for a quarrel. It was his aim to carry the 'gree' ower a' upon the Moor at everything, that the king, who is said to be as fond o' thae sort o' sports as onybody, might tak notice o' him, and do something for him. There was a cowardliness in the very idea o' such conduct—it showed a fox's heart in the carcase o' a bullock. Weel, those that were seeking me got me, and clean off hand I awa to the tent where he was making a' his great braggadocio, and, says I to him, 'Robin,' says I, 'I'm your man at onything ye like, and for whatever ye like. I'll run ye—or, I'll jump ye—I'll putt the stone wi' ye—or, *I'll fight ye*—and, if ye like it better, I'll wrestle ye—or try ye at the cudgels—and dinna be cutting your

capers there ower a wheen callants.' Weel, up he got, and a ring was made aback o' the tent. He had an oak stick as thick as your wrist, and I had naething but the bit half switch that I hae in my hand the now, for driving up the Galloway. Mine was a mere bog-reed to his, independent o' its being fully six inches shorter—and, if ye ken onything about cudgelling, that was a material point. 'Od, sir, I found I couldna cope wi' him. My stick, or rather switch, was nae better than half a dozen o' rashes plaited together. 'Will ony o' ye lend me a stick, gentlemen?' cried I to the bystanders, while I keepit guarding him off the best way I could. Aboon a dozen were offered in an instant. I gript at the nearest. Now 'Heaven hae mercy on ye!' said I, and gied him a whissel beneath the elbow, and, before ye could say Jock Robison! cam clink across his knee. I declare to ye, sir, he cam spinning down like a totum. He talked nae mair o' wrestling, or cudgelling, or onything else that day. I settled him for four-and-twenty hours at ony rate. Weel, sir, I was perfectly delighted when I saw you lay him on the broad o' his back yesterday; and I had nae mair words wi' him, frae the day that I humbled him, until about four hours syne, when I met in wi' him on the Moor, amang three or four o' his cronies, at his auld trade o' boasting again. I had nae patience wi' him. But he had a drop ower meikle, and, at ony rate, I thought there could be nae honour in beating the same man twice. But, says I to him 'Ye needna craw sae loud, for, independent o' me bringing ye to the ground at cudgelling, and making ye no worth a doit, I saw a youngster that wrestled wi' ye yesterday, twist ye like a barley-strae.' And, to do him justice, sir, he didna attempt to deny it, but said that ye wud do the same by me, if I would try ye, and offered to back ye against ony man in the twa kingdoms. Now, sir, I looked about all the day in the crowd, just to see if I

could clap my een on ye, and to ask ye, in a friendly way, if ye would let me try what sort o' stuff ye are made o', but I couldna fall in wi' ye; and now I'm really glad that I hae met wi' ye—and as this is a gay level place here, and the ground is not very hard, what do ye say if we try a thraw, in a neighbourly way; and after that, we can cut a bit branch frae ane o' the allers, for a cudgelling bout. Ye will really very particularly oblige me, sir, if ye will."

The stranger readily replied, "With all my heart, friend—be it so."

Andrew cast off his jacket and bonnet, and, throwing them on the ground, his large water-dog, which was called Cæsar, placed himself beside them.

"Dinna thraw till I get a grip," cried Andrew, as the stranger had him already lifted from his feet—"that's no fair—it's no our country way o' thrawing."

The request was granted, and only granted, when Andrew measured his length upon the ground, and his dog sprang forward to attack the victor.

"Get back, Cæsar!" shouted its master—"It was a fair fa', I canna deny it! Sorrow tak me if I thought there was a man in ten parishes could hae done the like! Gie's yer hand," said he, as he rose to his feet; "I'll thraw nor cudgel nae mair wi' you; but, as sure as my name's Andrew, I would bite my last coin through the middle, to gie ye the half o't, should ye want it. I like to meet wi' a good man, even though he should be better than mysel—and, in the particular o' wrestling, I allow that ye do bang me—though I dinna say how we might stand in other respects, for they've no been tried. But it was a fair fa'. 'Od, ye gied me a jirk as though I had been touched by lightning."

Before reaching Eyemouth, they came to a change-house by the wayside, which was kept by a widow, called Nancy

Hewitt; and who was not only noted on account of the excellence of the liquor with which she supplied her customers, but who also had a daughter, named Janet, whose beauty rendered her the toast of the countryside.

"I am always in the habit," said Andrew, "o' stopping here for refreshment, and, if ye hae nae objections, we'll toom a stoup together."

"Cheerily, cheerily," answered his companion.

The fair daughter of the hostess was from home when they entered, and Andrew inquired after her with a solicitude that bespoke something more between them than mere acquaintanceship. The stranger slightly intimated that he had heard of her, and, after a few seemingly indifferent questions respecting her, for a few minutes became silent and thoughtful.

"Hoot, man," said Andrew, "I am vexed to see ye sae dowie—gie cauld care a kick like a foot-ba'. This is nae time to be sad when the king is merry, and the country's merry, an' we're a' happy thegither. Cheer up, I say, man—what's the matter wi' ye?—care has a strange look on a body's shouthers at seven or eight and twenty; and I dinna think ye can be mair. I am on the wrang side o' three and thirty, and I would snap my fingers at it, were it blawing its breath in my face as snell as a drift on an open moor! Losh man! what ails ye? Ye would say I had met wi' a friar in orders grey, lamenting owre the sins o' the world, and the poverty o' his pocket, instead o' a young bang fellow like you, that's a match for onybody. Come, here's to the health o' bonny Jenny Hewitt."

"With all my heart," said the stranger; and, pronouncing the name of the fair maiden, quaffed off his liquor.

"Now, that's wiselike; there's some spirit in that," said Andrew, following his example; "let's be merry while we can; that's aye my creed. The ne'er a grain o' guid, as I

used to say to my mother, comes out o' melancholy. Let's hae a sang—I see you hae a singing face—or I'll gie ye ane mysel, to mak a beginning."

So saying, with a voice like thunder broken into music, he sang as follows:—

In our young, young days,
When the gowany braes
Were our temple o' joy and glee,
Some dour auld body would shake his head,
And tell us our gladness away would flee,
And our hearts beat as heavy as lead.
Stupid auld body—silly auld body—
His mother spained him wi' a canker-worm.
In our auld, auld days, the gowany braes
Are memory's rainbows owre time and storm.

In our proud young days,
When the gowany braes
Kenn'd the feet o' my love and me,
Some ill-matched carle would girn and say—
"Puir things! wi' a twalmonth's marriage, and ye
Will find love like a snaw-ba' decay."
Stupid auld carle—leein' auld carle—
His mother spained him wi' a canker-worm.
In our auld, auld days, like gowany braes,
Our love unchang'd, has its youthfu' form.

In our grey-haired days,
When the gowany braes
Are owre steep for our feet to climb—
When her back is bowed, and her lovely e'e,
Once bricht as a beam frae the sun, is dim—
She'll be still my bit lassie to me.
Stupid auld body—wicked auld body—
Love, like the gowan's a winter liver.
The smile o' a wife is the sun o' its life,
An' her bosom a brae where it blooms for ever.

A few minutes after Andrew had concluded his song, the fair daughter of their hostess entered the house. Andrew's

first glance bespoke the lover, and the smile with which she returned it showed that the young fisherman and cadger was not an unaccepted wooer.

"By my sooth, fair maiden," said the stranger, "and thy sweet face doesna belie its fame; admiration fails in painting the loveliness of thy glowing cheeks, and thine een might make a moonbeam blush!"

He seemed practised in the art of gallantry, and poured into her ear other compliments in a similar strain. She hung her head, and turned it aside from him, as a woman will when flattered, or when she wishes to be flattered, but she did not rise to depart; and he felt that the incense which he offered to her beauty was not unacceptable. But the words and the attentions of the stranger were as daggers in the ears, and as wormwood in the heart of Andrew.

"The mischief rive his smooth tongue out o' his head!" thought Andrew; "but though I hae nae chance in speaking balderdash wi' him, and though he did thraw me (and it was maybe by an unmanly quirk after a'), I'll let her see, if he has the glibest tongue, wha has the manliest arm!"

Neither love nor liquor, however, can allay the cravings of a hungry stomach, and the stranger (who evidently beguiled Andrew to drink more than the portion that ought to have fallen to him) called for something to eat, by way of a relish.

"O sir," said Nancy Hewitt, their hostess, "I'm verra sorry an' vexed that I hae naething in the house that I could gie ye—naething o' kitchen kind but the haddocks which Andrew left this forenoon; an' I hae been sae thrang wi' folk gaun back an' forret to Lamberton, that they're no gutted yet. But if ye could tak them, ye are welcome to them."

"Gut two, then, good dame, and prepare them," said the stranger.

"I doubt, sir, twa winna do," said she, "for they're but sma'—I had better gut thrie."

"Certainly, *gut thrie*," said Andrew; "I brought the stranger in—and what is a haddie, or what are they worth?" for Andrew was anxious that the attention of his companion should be turned to anything, were it only withdrawn from Janet's face.

"You are a generous-hearted fellow," said the stranger, "and *gut thrie* shall I call you, if we meet again."

Having therefore partaken of his repast, he proposed that they should again fill the stoup to friendship's growth; and although Andrew was wroth and jealous because of the words which he had spoken, and the attention he had shewn to fair Janet, he was not made of materials to resist the proposition to have another cup. But while they were yet drinking it, Andrew's pony, which had repeatedly raised its fore foot and struck it heavily on the ground, as if calling on its master to "come," being either scared, or its patience being utterly exhausted, set off at a canter from the door. He had rushed out without his bonnet, but, before he reached the road, it was fully forty yards a-head of him, and the louder he called on it, the nearer did the pony increase its pace to a gallop.

Andrew had scarce reached the door, when the stranger drew out a well-lined purse, and, after jerking it in his hand, he again replaced it in his pocket, and more boldly than before renewed his gallantries to fair Janet. Emboldened, however, by what he conceived to have been his recent success, he now overshot the mark; and, as Andrew again reached the house, he was aroused by the cries of—

"Mother! Mother!—O Andrew! Andrew!"

Old Nancy's voice, too, broke upon his ears at its highest scolding pitch; but he could only distinguish the word "Scoundrel!"

He rushed into the room, and there he beheld his own Janet struggling in the embrace of the stranger.

"Villain!" cried Andrew, and the other started round—but with our fisherman at all times it was but a word and a blow—and his blood, which before had been heated and fermenting, now boiled—he raised his hand and dealt a blow at his companion, which, before he could parry it, laid him prostrate on the floor.

"Base loon!" cried the stranger, starting to his feet, "ye shall rue that blow." And he flung off his bonnet as if to return it.

"Hooly, billy," said Andrew, "there is as little manliness in fighting afore women as there was in your conduct to my bit Janet. But naething will gie me mair satisfaction than a round wi' ye—so wi' a' my heart—come to the door, and the best man for it."

Blood was issuing from the lips of the stranger, but he seemed nothing loath to accompany his quondam friend to the door. Janet, however, flung her arms around Andrew, and the old woman stood between them, and implored them, for her sake, to keep the peace towards each other.

"O sir!" cried she, "let there be nae such carryings on in my house. My dochter and me are twa lone women, and the disgrace o' such an on-carrying, and at such a time, too, when the king an a' the gentry are in the neighbourhood, might be attended by there's nae saying what consequences to me and mine. Andrew, man, I wonder that ye haena mair sense."

"Sense!" returned Andrew, "I hae baith sense and feeling; and had it been the king himsel that I saw layin a hand upon my Janet, I would hae served him in the same way that I did that man."

"Ye brag largely and freely, neighbour," said the stranger; throwing down a noble upon the table to pay for his

entertainment; but we shall meet again, where there are no women to interfere."

"Tak up your gowd, sir," replied Andrew, "for though I can boast o' nae sic siller, coppers will pay for a' that we have had. I brought you in here to treat ye, and our quarrel shall make nae difference as to that. Sae put up your gowd again; and as to meeting ye—I will meet ye the night, the morn, at ony place, or at ony time."

"I shall ask ye to meet me before ye dare," said the stranger; and leaving the coin upon the table as he left the house, "the gowd," added he, "will buy a gown and a bodice for the bosom of bonny Janet."

"I insist, sir, that you tak back the siller," cried Andrew.

"Dearsake, Andrew," said old Nancy, "he's no offering it to you! It's no you that has ony richt to refuse it." And taking up the piece, she examined it with a look of satisfaction, turning it round and round in her fingers—wrapped it in a small piece of linen rag, which lay in a corner of the room, and mechanically slipped it into her pocket. But it was neither every day, every week, nor every year, that Nancy Hewitt saw a coin of gold.

On the third day after the encounter between Strong Andrew and the stranger, the last and great day of the festivities on Lamberton took place; for on that day the royal bride was to arrive. The summer sun ushered in a glorious morning—its beams fell as a sheet of gold on the broad ocean, melting down and chaining its waves in repose. To the south lay Lindisferne, where St. Cuthbert had wrought miracles, with the Ferne Isles where he lived, prayed, and died, and the proud rock on which King Ida reigned.* They seemed to sleep in the morning sunbeams—smiling in sleep. To the north was gigantic St. Abb's, stretching out into the sea, as if reposing on its breast; amidst their

* Bamborough.

feet and behind them, stretched the Moor and its purple heather; while, from the distance, the Cheviots looked down on them; and Hallidon, manured by the bones of slaughtered thousands, lay at their hand.

Yet, before sunrise, thousands were crowding to the gay scene, from every corner of Berwickshire, and from Roxburgh and the Eastern Lothian. The pavilions exhibited more costly decorations. Fair ladies, in their gayest attire, hung upon the arms of brave knights. An immense amphitheatre, where the great tourneyings and combats of the day were to take place, was seated round; and at one part of it was a richly canopied dais, where the young king, with his blooming queen, and the chief peers and ladies of both countries, were to sit, and witness the spectacle. Merry music reverbed in every direction, and the rocks and the glens re-echoed it; and ever and anon, as it pealed around, the assembled thousands shouted—"Long live our guid king James, and his bonny bride." Around the pavilions, too, strutted the courtiers with the huge ruffles of their shirts reaching over their shoulders—their scented gloves—flat bonnets, set on the one side of their heads like the cap of a modern dandy—spangled slippers, and a bunch of ribbons at their knees.

Amongst the more humble followers of the court, the immortal Dunbar, who was neglected in his own day, and who has been scarce less neglected and overlooked by posterity, was conspicuous. The poet-priest appeared to be a director of the intellectual amusements of the day. But although they delighted the multitude, and he afterwards immortalised the marriage of his royal master, by his exquisite poem of "The Thistle and the Rose," he was doomed to experience that genius could neither procure the patronage of kings nor church preferment; and, in truth, it was small preferment with which Dunbar would have been satisfied, for, after dancing the courtier in vain

(and they were then a race of beings of new-birth in Scotland), we find him saying—

> "Greit abbais graith I nill to gather
> But *ane kirk scant coverit with hadder*,
> *For I of lytil wald be fane*."

But, in the days of poor Dunbar, church patronage seems to have been conferred somewhat after the fashion of our own times, if not worse, for he again says—

> "I knaw nocht how the kirk is gydit,
> But benefices are nocht leil divydit;
> Sum men hes sevin, and I nocht ane!"

All around wore a glad and a sunny look, and, while the morning was yet young, the sound of the salute from the cannon on the ramparts of Berwick, announced that the royal bride was approaching. The pavilions occupied a commanding situation on the heath, and the noble retinue of the princes could be observed moving along, their gay colours flashing in the sun, a few minutes after they issued from the walls of the town. A loud, a long, and a glad shout burst from the Scottish host, as they observed them approach, and hundreds of knights and nobles, dashing their glittering spurs into the sides of their proudly caparisoned steeds, rode forth to meet them, and to give their welcome, and offer their first homage to their future queen. There was a movement and a buzz of joy throughout the multitude; and they moved towards the ancient kirk.

The procession that accompanied the young princess of England into Scotland drew near; at its head rode the proud Earl of Surrey, the Earl of Northumberland, warden of the eastern marches, with many hundreds more, the flower of England's nobility and gentry, in their costliest array. In the procession, also, were thousands of the inhabitants of Northumberland; and the good citizens of

Berwick-upon-Tweed, headed by their captain, Lord Thomas Darcy, and the porter of their gates, Mr. Christopher Clapham, who was appointed one of the trustees on the part of the king of England, to see that the terms of his daughter's jointure were duly fulfilled.

There, however, was less eagerness on the part of the young monarch to behold his bride than on that of his subjects. We will not say that he had exactly imbibed the principles of a libertine, but it is well known that he was a *gallant* in the most *liberal* signification of the term, and that his amours extended to all ranks. He had, therefore, until he had well nigh reached his thirtieth year, evaded the curb of matrimony; and it was not until the necessity of his marriage, for the welfare of his country, was urged upon him by his nobles, that he agreed to take the hand of young Margaret of England. And of her it might have been truly said, that his

> "Peggy was a young thing,
> Just entering in her teens,"

for she had hardly completed her fourteenth year. But she was a well-grown girl, one on whom was opening the dawn of loveliest womanhood—she was beautiful, and the gentleness of her temper exceeded her beauty. Young James was the most chivalrous prince of his age: he worshipped beauty, and he could not appear coldly before one of the sex And having come to the determination (though unwillingly) to give up his bachelorism, or, as he called it, liberty, he at length resolved to meet his bride as became one whose name was chronicled on the page of chivalry. He accordingly arrayed himself in a jacket of black velvet, edged with crimson, and the edgings bordered with a white fur. His doublet was of the finest satin, and of a violet colour; his spurs were of gold, his hose crimson, and precious stones bespangled his shirt-collar. The reiterated shouts of the multitude announced the approach of the

queen, and, thus arrayed, the young king rode forth to greet her.

He entered the kirk, at the further end of which stood his fair bride between the Earls of Surrey and Northumberland. He started, he seemed to pause as his eyes fell upon her, but in a moment they were again lighted up with more than their wonted lustre. He had heard of her loveliness, but report had failed in doing justice to the picture. He approached to where she stood—he sank upon his knee—he raised her hand to his lips. The English nobility were struck with admiration at the delicate gallantry of the Scottish king.

I need not enter into the particulars of the ceremony. The youthful monarch conducted his yet more youthful bride and her attendants to his pavilion, while the heralds summoned the knights to the tournament, and prepared the other sports of the day. He took his lute and performed before her, and he sang words of his own composition, which related to her—for, like others of his family that had gone before, and that came after him, James had a spark of poetry in his soul.

"And dost thou understand this instrument, my own love?" said he, handing her the lute.

She blushed, and, taking it in her hand, began to "discourse most eloquent music," and James, filled with admiration, again sinking on his knee, and clasping his hands together, remained in this attitude before her, until the trumpets of the heralds announced that the knights were in readiness for the tournament.

Thousands were crowded around the circle in which the knights were to exhibit their skill and prowess. The royal party took their seats on the dais prepared for them. Several trials of skill, with sword, spear, and battle-axe, had taken place, and the spectators had awarded to the successful competitors their shouts of approbation, when

the young king, who sat beside his queen, surrounded by the Lords Surrey and Northumberland, and the nobles of his kindred, together with the ladies of high degree, said—

"Troth, my lords, and whatever ye may think, they play it but coldly. Excuse me, your Majesty, for a few minutes," continued he, addressing his young bride; "I must put spirit into the spectacle."

Thus saying, the young monarch left the side of his bride, and, for a time, the same breaking of swords, spears, and battle-axes continued, when the chief herald of the tournament announced the SAVAGE KNIGHT. He entered the lists on foot, a visor concealing his face, arrayed as an Indian chief. He was clothed in a skin fitting tightly to his body, which gave half of it the appearance of nudity. In his left hand he held a javelin, in his right hand he brandished a spear.

"Who is he?" was the murmur that rang through the crowd; but no one could tell, and the knights in the area knew not. He walked towards the centre of the circle—he raised his spear—he shook it in defiance towards every knight that stood around—and they were there from England as well as from Scotland. But they seemed to demur amongst themselves who should first measure their strength with him. Not that they either feared his strength or skill, but that, knowing the eccentricity of the king, they apprehended that the individual whom he had sent against them, in such an uncouth garb, and who was to hold combat with them at such extravagant odds, they being on horseback, while he was on foot, might be no true knight, but some base-born man whom the monarch had sent against them for a jest's sake. But, while they communed together, the *Savage Knight* approached near where they stood, and, crying to them, said—

"What is it ye fear, Sir Knights, that ye hold consulta-

tion together. Is it my mailed body, or panoplied steed? —or fear ye that my blood is base enough to rust your swords? Come on, ye are welcome to a trial of its colour."

Provoked by his taunt, several sprang from their horses, and appeared emulous who should encounter him. But, at the very onset, the Savage Knight wrested the sword of the first who opposed him from his hand. In a few minutes the second was in like manner discomfited, and, after a long and desperate encounter, the third was hurled to the ground, and the weapon of the wild knight was pointed to his throat. The spectators rent the air with acclamations. Again the unknown stood in the midst of the circle, and brandished his spear in defiance. But enough had been seen of his strength and his skill, and no man dared to encounter him. Again the multitude shouted more loudly, and he walked around the amphitheatre, bowing lowly towards the spectators, and receiving their congratulations.

Now, in the midst of the motley congregation, and almost at the point farthest removed from the dais of royalty, stood none other than Strong Andrew, with bonny Janet under his arm; and it so happened, that when the Savage Knight was within view of where Andrew stood, his visor fell, and, though it was instantly replaced, it enabled our sturdy fisherman to obtain a glance of his countenance, and he exclaimed—

"'Od save us, Janet, woman, look, look look!—do ye see wha it is! Confound me, if it isna the very chield that I gied the clout in the lug to in your mother's the other night for his good behaviour. Weel, as sure as death, I gie him credit for what he has done—he's ta'en the measure o' their feet, onyway! A knight!—he's nae mair a knight than I'm ane—but it shows that knights are nae better than other folk."

There was a pause for a short space—again the monarch

sat upon the dais by the side of his blooming bride. The great spectacle of the day was about to be exhibited. This spectacle was a battle in earnest between an equal number of Borderers and Highlanders. The heralds and the marshals of the combat rode round the amphitheatre, and proclaimed that rewards would be bestowed on all who signalized themselves by their courage, and to the most distinguished a purse of gold would be given by the hands of the king himself. Numbers of armed clansmen and Borderers entered the area. Andrew's fingers began to move, and his fists were suddenly clenched, relaxed, and clenched again. He began to move his shoulders also. His whole body became restless, and his soul manifested the same symptoms, and he half involuntarily exclaimed—

"Now, here's a chance!"

"Chance for what, Andrew dear?" inquired Janet, tremulously—for she knew his nature.

"To mak a fortune in a moment," returned he, eagerly —"to be married the morn! The king is to gie a purse o' gold!"

Now, the only obstacle that stood between the immediate union of Andrew and Janet was his poverty.

"Oh, come awa, Andrew, love," said she, imploringly, and pulling his arm as she spoke; "I see your drift!—come awa—come awa—we have seen enough. Dinna be after ony sic nonsense, or thrawing awa your life on sic an errand."

"Wheesht, Janet, hinny—wheesht," said he; "dinna be talking havers. Just stand you here—there's not the smallest danger—I'll be back to ye in ten minutes or a quarter of an hour at the utmost—ye may tak my word upon that."

"Andrew!" cried she, "are ye out o' yer mind a'thegither—or do ye want to put me out o' mine! I really think it looks like it! O man, would ye be guilty o' mur-

dering yoursel, I may say!—come awa—come awa, dear —for I'll no stand to see it."

"Hoot, Janet, hinny," returned he, "come, dear, dinna be silly."

Now, the number of the Highland party was completed, and they stood, a band of hardy, determined, and desperate-looking men; but the party of the Borderers was one deficient.

"Is there not another," cried the herald, "to stand forth, and maintain with his sword the honour and courage of the Borders?"

"Yes! here am I!" shouted Andrew, and drawing Janet's arm from his; "now, dearest," added he, hastily, "just hae patience—just stand here for ten minutes—and I'll let ye see what I can do."

She would have detained him; but in a moment he sprang into the amphitheatre, and exclaimed—

"Now, Sir Knights, ye that hae been trying yer hands at the tourneyings, will ony o' ye hae the guidness to obleege me wi' the loan o' yer sword for a wee while, and I'll be bond for ye I'll no disgrace it—I'll try the temper o' it in earnest."

Andrew instantly had a dozen to choose upon; and he took his place amongst the Borderers.

When he joined them, those who knew him, said—"The day is ours—Andrew is a host in himsel."

The marshals gave the signal for the onset; and a deadly, a savage onset it was. Swords were shivered to the hilt. Men, who had done each other no wrong, who had never met before, grasped each other by the throat—the Highland dirk and the Border knife were drawn. Men plunged them into each other—they fell together—they rolled, the one over the other, in the struggles and the agonies of death. The wounded strewed the ground—they strove to crawl from the strife of their comrades.

The dead lay upon the dying, and the dying on the dead. Death had reaped a harvest from both parties; and no man could tell on which side would lie the victory. Yet no man could stand before the sword-arm of Andrew—antagonist after antagonist fell before him. He rushed to every part of the combat; and wheresoever he went, the advantage was in favour of the Borderers. He was the champion of the field—the hero of the fight. The king gave a signal (perhaps because his young queen was horrified with the game of butchery), and at the command of the marshals the combatants on both sides laid down their arms. Reiterated shouts again rang from the spectators. Some clapped their hands and cried—"Eyemouth yet!" —"Wha's like Andrew!"—"We'll carry him hame shouther high!" cried some of his townsmen.

During the combat, poor Janet had been blind with anxiety, and was supported in the arms of the spectators who saw him rush from her side. But as the shouts of his name burst on her ear, consciousness returned; and she beheld him, with the sword in his hand, hastening towards her. Yet ere he had reached where she stood, he was summoned, by the men-at-arms, who had kept the multitude from pressing into the amphitheatre, to appear before the king, to receive from his hands the promised reward.

Anxious as he had been to obtain the prize, poor Andrew, notwithstanding his heroism, trembled at the thought of appearing in the presence of a monarch. His idea of the king was composed of imaginings of power, and greatness, and wisdom, and splendour—he knew him to be a man, but he did not think of him as such. And he said to those who summoned him to the royal presence—

"Oh, save us a', sirs! what shall I say to him? or what will he say to me? How shall I behave? I would rather want the siller than gang wi' ye!"

In this state of tremor and anxiety, Andrew was con-

ducted towards the canopied dais before the Majesty of Scotland. He was led to the foot of the steps which ascended to the seat where the monarch and his bride sat. His eyes were riveted to the ground, and he needed not to doff his bonnet, for he had lost it in the conflict.

"Look up, brave cock o' the Borders," said the monarch; "certes, man, ye would hae an ill-faured face if ye needed to hide it, after exhibiting sic a heart and arm."

Andrew raised his head in confusion; but scarce had his eyes fallen on the countenance of the king, when he started back, as though he beheld the face of a spirit.

"Ha! traitor! exclaimed the monarch, and a frown gathered on his brow.

In a moment, Andrew perceived that his victor-wrestler —his crony in Lucky Hewitt's—the tempter of his Janet—the man whom he had felled with a blow, and whose blood he had drawn—and the King of Scotland, was one and the same person.

"Guid gracious!" exclaimed Andrew, "I'm a done man!"

"Seize him!" said the king.

But ere he had said it, Andrew recollected that if he had a good right hand; he had a pair of as good heels; and if he had trusted to the one a few minutes before, he would trust to the latter now, and away he bounded like a startled deer, carrying his sword in his hand.

A few seconds elapsed before the astonished servants of the king recovered presence of mind to pursue him. As he fled, the dense crowd that encircled the amphitheatre surrounded him; but many of them knew him—none had forgotten his terrible courage—and, although they heard the cry re-echoed by the attendants of the monarch to seize him, they opened an avenue when he approached,

and permitted him to rush through them. Though, perhaps, the fear of the sword which he brandished in his hand, and the terrible effects of which they had all witnessed, contributed not less than admiration of his courage, to procure him his ready egress from amongst them.

He rushed towards the sea-banks, and suddenly disappeared where they seemed precipitous, and was lost to his pursuers; and after an hour's search, they returned to the king, stating that they had lost trace of him, and could not find him.

"Go back, ye bull-dogs!" exclaimed our monarch, angrily; "seek him—find him—nor again enter our presence until ye again bring him bound before us at Holyrood."

They therefore again proceeded in quest of the unfortunate fugitive; and the monarch having conducted his royal bride to the pavilion, cast off his jacket of black velvet, and arrayed himself in one of cloth of gold, with edgings of purple and of sable fur. His favourite steed, caparisoned to carry two, and with its panoply embroidered with jewels, was brought before his pavilion. The monarch approached the door, leading his queen in his hand. He lightly vaulted into the saddle—he again took the hand of his bride, and placed her behind him; and in this manner, a hundred peers and nobles following in his train, the King of Scotland conducted his young queen through the land, and to the palace of his fathers. The people shouted as the royal cavalcade departed, and Scotch and English voices joined in the cry of—"Long live Scotland's king and queen." Yet there were some who were silent, and who thought that poor Andrew the fisherman, the champion of the day, had been cruelly treated, though they knew not his offence. Those who knew him, said—

"It bangs a'! we're sure Andrew never saw the king

in his life before. He never was ten miles out o' Eyemouth in his days. We ha'e kenned him since a callant, and never heard a word laid against his character. The king must hae taken him for somebody else—and he was foolish to run for it."

But, while the multitude shouted, and joined in the festivities of the day, there was one that hurried through the midst of them, wringing her hands, and weeping as she went—even poor Janet. At the moment when she was roused from the stupefaction of feeling produced by the horrors of the conflict, and when her arms were outstretched to welcome her hero, as he was flying to them in triumph, she had seen him led before his prince, to receive his praise and his royal gifts; but, instead of these, she heard him denounced as a *traitor*, as the king's words were echoed round. She beheld him fly for safety, and armed men pursuing him. She was bewildered—wildly bewildered. But every motion gave place to anguish; and she returned to her mother's house alone, and sank upon her bed, and wept.

She could scarce relate to her parent the cause of her grief; but others, who had been witnesses of the regal festival, called at Widow Hewitt's for refreshment, as they returned home, and from them she gathered that her intended son-in-law had been the champion of the day; but that, when he had been led forward to receive the purse from the hands of the king, the monarch, instead of bestowing it, denounced him as a traitor; "and when he fled," added they, "his majesty ordered him to be brought to him dead or alive!"—for, in the days of our fathers, men used the *license* that is exemplified in the fable of the Black Crows, quite as much as it is used now. The king certainly had commanded that Andrew should be brought to him; but he had said nothing of his being brought *dead*.

Nancy lifted her hands in astonishment as high as her ceiling (and it was not a high one, and was formed of rushes)—"Preserve us, sirs!" said she, "ye perfectly astonish me athegither! Poor chield! I'm sure Andrew wadna harm a dog! A *traitor!* say ye, the king ca'ed him? That's something very bad, isn't it? An' surely—na, na, Andrew couldna be guilty o't—the king maun be a strange sort o' man."

But, about midnight, a gentle knocking was heard at the window, and a well-known voice said, in an under tone—

"Janet! Janet! it is me!"

"It is *him* mother! it is Andrew! they haena gotten him yet!" And she ran to the door and admitted him; and, when he had entered, she continued, "O Andrew! what, in the name o' wonder, is the meaning o' the king's being in a passion at ye? What did ye say or do to him?—or what can be the meaning o't?"

"It is really very singular, Andrew," interrupted the old woman; "what *hae* ye done?—what *is really the meaning o't?*"

"Meaning!" said Andrew, "ye may weel ask that! I maun get awa' into England this very night, or my life's no worth a straw; and it's ten chances to ane that it may be safe there. Wha is the king, think ye?—now, just think wha?"

"Wha *is* the king!" said Nanny, with a look, and in a tone of astonishment—"I dinna comprehend ye, Andrew—what do ye mean? Wha can the king be, but just the king."

"Oh!" said Andrew, "ye mind the chield that cam here wi' me the other night, that left the gowd noble for the three haddies that him and I had atween us, and that I gied a clout in the haffets to, and brought the blood ower his lips, for his behaviour to Jenny!—*yon was the king!*"

"Yon the king!" cried Janet.

"Yon the king!" exclaimed her mother; "and hae I really had the king o' Scotland in my house, sitting at my fireside, and cooked a supper for him! Weel, I think, yon the king! Aha! he's a bonny man!"

"O mother!" exclaimed Janet; bonny here, bonny there, dinna talk sae—he is threatening the life o' poor Andrew, who has got into trouble and sorrow on my account. Oh, dear me! what shall I do, Andrew!—Andrew!" she continued, and wrung her hands.

"There's just ae thing, hinny," said he; "I must endeavour to get to the other side o' the Tweed, before folk are astir in the morning; so I maun leave ye directly, but I just ventured to come and bid ye fareweel. And there's just ae thing that I hae to say and to request, and that is, that, if I darena come back to Scotland to marry ye, that ye will come owre to England to me, as soon as I can get into some way o' providing for ye. Will ye promise, Jenny?"

"O yes! yes, Andrew!" she cried, "I'll come to ye—for it is entirely on my account that ye've to flee. But I'll do mair than that; for this very week I will go to Edinburgh, and I will watch in the way o' the king and the queen, and on my knees I'll implore him to pardon ye; and, if he refuses, I ken what I ken."

"Na, na, Jenny dear," said he, "dinna think o' that—I wad rather suffer banishment, and live in jeopardy for ever, than that ye should place yoursel in his power or in his presence. But what do ye ken, dear?"

Ken!" replied she; "if he refuses to pardon ye, I'll threaten to tell the queen what he said to me, and what offers he made to me when ye was running out after the powny."

Andrew was about to answer her, when he started at a heavy sound of footsteps approaching the cottage.

"They are in search o' me!" he exclaimed.

Instantly a dozen of armed men entered the cottage.

"We have found him," cried they to their companions without; "the traitor is here."

Andrew, finding that resistance would be hopeless, gave up the sword which he still carried, and suffered them to bind his arms. Jenny clung round his neck and wept. Her mother sat speechless with terror.

"Fareweel, Jenny, dear!" said Andrew—"fareweel!—Dinna distress yoursel sae—things mayna turn out sae ill as we apprehend. I can hardly think that the king will be sae cruel and sae unjust as to tak my life. Is that no your opinion, sirs?" added he, addressing the armed men.

"We are not to be your judges," said he who appeared to be their leader; "ye are our prisoner, by his Majesty's command, and that is a' we ken about the matter. But ye are denounced as a traitor, and the king spares nane such."

Poor Janet shrieked as she heard the hopeless and cruel words, and again cried—

"But the queen shall ken a'!"

Jenny's arms were rudely torn from around his neck, and he was dragged from the house; and his arms, as I have stated, being bound, he was placed behind a horseman, and his body was fastened to that of the trooper. In this manner he was conducted to Edinburgh, where he was cast into prison to await his doom.

Within two days, Janet and her mother were seized also, at the very moment when the former was preparing to set out to implore his pardon—and accused of harbouring and concealing in their house one whom the king had denounced as guilty of treason.

Janet submitted to her fate without a murmur, and only said—"Weel, if Andrew be to suffer upon my account, I

am willing to do the same for his. But surely neither you nor the king can be sae cruel as to harm my poor auld mother!"

"Oh, dear! dear!" cried the old woman to those who came to apprehend her—"Was there ever the like o' this seen or heard tell o'! Before I kenned wha the king was, I took him to be a kind lad and a canny lad, and he canna say but I showed him every attention, and even prevented Andrew from striking him again; and what gratification can it be to him to tak awa the life o' a lone widow, and a bit helpless lassie?"

But, notwithstanding her remonstrances, Nancy Hewitt and her beautiful daughter were conducted as prisoners to the metropolis.

On the fourth day of his confinement, Andrew was summoned before King James and his nobles, to receive his sentence and undergo its punishment. The monarch, in the midst of his lords, sat in a large apartment in the castle; armed men, with naked swords in their hands, stood around, and the frown gathered on his face as the prisoner was led into his presence.

Andrew bowed before the monarch, then raised his head and looked around, with an expression on his countenance which showed that, although he expected death, he feared it not.

"How now, ye traitor knave!" said the king, sternly; "do ye deny that ye raised your hand against our royal person?"

"No!" was the brief and bold reply of the dauntless fisherman.

"Ye have heard, kinsmen," continued the monarch, "his confession of his guiltiness from his own lips—what punishment do ye award him?"

"Death! the traitor's doom!" replied the nobles.

"Nay, troth," said James, "we shall be less just than

merciful; and because of his brave bearing at Lamberton, his life shall be spared—but, certes, the hand that was raised against our person shall be struck off.—Prepare the block!"

Now, the block was brought into the midst of the floor, and Andrew was made to kneel, and his arm was bared and placed upon it—and the executioner stood by with his drawn sword, waiting the signal from the king to strike off the hand, when the fair young queen, with her attendants, entered the apartment. The king rose to meet her, saying—

"What would my fair queen?"

"A boon! a boon! my liege," playfully replied the blooming princess; "that ye strike not off the hand of this audacious man, but that ye chain it for his life."

"Be it so, my fair one," said the king; and, taking the sword of the executioner in his hand, he touched the kneeling culprit on the shoulder with it, saying—"Rise up Sir Andrew Gut-thrie, and thus do we chain your offending hand!"—the young queen at the same moment raised a veil with which she had concealed the features of bonny Janet, and the king taking her hand, placed it in Andrew's.

"My conscience!" exclaimed Andrew, "am I in existence!—do I dream, or what?—O Jenny, woman!—O your Majesty!—what shall I say?"

"Nothing," replied the monarch, "but the king cam' in the cadger's way—and Sir Andrew Gut-thrie and his bonny bride shall be provided for."

## THE ROYAL RAID.

Among the promoters of the wars and disturbances which so long ravaged the Border counties, authors have been anxious to class prominently the tender sex; not, however, in the way in which it was imputed to these fair assuagers of man's misfortunes, that they shed the blood of knights, in the times of Froissart. A whole book has been penned—and another might follow it—on the wars and dissensions produced by beautiful women; and, without mounting upwards to Eve, it has been thought very well to begin with the maiden of Troy, who produced the most spirited piece of knight-errantry that ever was acted on the stage of the world. But, in almost every case on record, it was the beauty of the fair disturbers, that, inflaming the spirit of rivalship, set men a-fighting with so much zeal; and true it seems to be, that, when beauty went into disrepute, and gunpowder came into fashion—both much about the same time—we have never had what may be called a *bona fide* heroic battle. But the part which the Border fair ones had in the bloody scenes of that distracted section of the country, is represented to have been very different. The housewife, in those times, served up to her hungry lord, under an imposing dish, a pair of spurs; and this is represented as having been the gentle mode by which the dame intimated that it was necessary for her lord to supply the larder. The Flower of Yarrow herself did not disdain to stimulate, in this way, the foraying spirit of old Harden. But we have good authority that there were beautiful exceptions from this barbarous practice; and, among these, we may safely place the unfortu-

nate lady of Cockburn of Henderland, the fair subject of the pathetic ballad of "The Border Widow"—a strain which, so long as poetry shall hold any influence over the heart of man, will continue to draw "soft pity's tear." If every Border chieftain's wife had been like this lady, we would have heard and read less of raids and robberies: the dish of spurs, that sent their lords to the foray, would have been exchanged for the soft embracing arms of affection, applied to keep them at home; and the blessings of domestic peace would have harmonized with and softened the spirits which a love of riot and rapine inflamed into excesses so often ending in death. We have wept over her grave; and who that has seen the old stone in Henderland churchyard—now broken in three pieces, but bearing still that epitaph which Longinus would have pronounced sublime, "Here lies Parys of Cockburn, and his wife Marjory"—and looked on the old ruins of their castle, now scarcely sufficient for a restingplace for the grey owl—could resist the rising emotion, or quell the heaving breast of pity? There lie Parys of Cockburn, and his wife Marjory! How little does that simple chronicle tell! and yet, how much! The eloquence of that pregnant negative of ultra-simplicity, is felt by those who know their fate; but how many have trod on the three parts of the broken tombstone, deciphered the divided syllables, and walked on, and never inquired who was Parys of Cockburn, or Marjory his wife! Their bones have long mouldered into the dust that now feeds a few wild alpine plants; their tombstone is a broken ruin, and will soon pass away; their castle, at a few paces' distance, is also a ruin of a few black, weathered stones; and the land they were proud to call their own, dignifies another name. The sculptor has failed, but the poet has succeeded; and time may flap his dark pinion in vain over the deserted churchyard of Henderland.

The Cockburns of Henderland were an old family of Selkirkshire. Long before the estate passed into the hands of strangers, we find the name and title holding a respectable place among the lists of chieftains that held a divided rule on the Borders. Those who have gratified themselves, as we have done, by a view of St. Mary's Loch, and the classic streams of the Ettrick and Yarrow, cannot fail to have seen the old property of Henderland, situated on the Megget, a small stream that runs into the loch. That was once the seat of the Cockburns; but there is a sad change there now. In the time of Lesly the historian, the whole of the country round Henderland, and the property itself, were covered with wood, that afforded shelter to the largest stags in Scotland; and now, there is scarcely a single tree that rears its head for miles around. Not distant from the mansion-house of the present proprietor, the ruins of the old castellated residence of the Cockburns may be seen; and, in the deserted burying-ground that surrounded the chapel, there is the broken tombstone, recording the deaths of the last members of the family, in the simple terms we have already mentioned. These are the appearances presented now; but, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, Henderland was a close retreat, surrounded by wood and water. The family castle stood in the midst of a dense wood of firs, mixed, in those parts where the soil supported the king of the forest, with large oaks. The Megget, rolling along its brattling stream, to St. Mary's, was, when in its calm moods, made available for the ends of picturesque beauty; and, when swollen by the mountain rills, served as a defence to the grounds and residence. In building their strengths, all the Border chiefs had particular reference to the natural advantages of the situation: the middle of a morass, the edge of a precipice rising from a mountain torrent, or a small island in the midst of a lake or river, were held to be favoured

localities; and Selkirkshire, in curious accordance with the habits of the people, had and has no want of these natural strongholds. Henderland had, perhaps, less to boast of, in point of natural strength, than Tushielaw, Mangerton, and some other of the Border residences; but, in the beauty of its wooded scenery, and the picturesque effect of sleeping lochs and roaring torrents, it might not be excelled in all the Borders.

In the minority of James V., Henderland Tower was occupied by Parys (supposed to be a corrupted orthography of Paris) Cockburn. He was then comparatively a young man, and inherited, with the property of a Border chief, all the usual characteristics of that class of lairds—a natural, inborn valour being looked upon as the principal of all the qualities of the heart; and yet, unfortunately, applied, by a habit that had assumed the strength of an instinct, to the strife of contending families, the enterprises of pillage, and the contentions of a circumscribed ambition. There was no peculiarity of the Borderers more remarkable than the union of a high valour that would have immortalized many a knight within the palisades, and the habit of overturning the rights of property—descending even to the grade of petty larceny. Now-a-days, theft and cowardice are generally supposed to be nearly allied; but, in those days, the chief of a large clan, inhabiting a stately castle, and famous for a noble courage throughout the land, could pause, in the progress homewards, with half-a-dozen of his neighbour's kine; look, with a furacious eye, on a bundle of hay, and regret, in his heart, that it had not four legs like a cow, by which he could make it steal itself home to his semi-baronial residence.* These apparently inconsistent and opposite qualities were possessed by the laird of Henderland. There was not in all Liddesdale a nobler champion of the rights

* The old story of Scott of Harden and the hay sow, is well known.

of war; and few there were that entered more keenly into the spirit of enterprise, to take from his neighbour a fat steer, and then fight, as nobly as ever did King Robert for a lost kingdom, in defence of his horned prey. The riever in Cockburn was, however, a character of mere habit; for he possessed qualities of heart and mind which raised him far above the Border chiefs with whom he was usually ranked. He could fight to the effusion of blood that came from within an inch of the coronary veins of his heart, for the property of a cow, that, next day, he would divide among the poor; and he was often heard to say, that, if Henderland had been among "the Lowdens," he would have been a gay courtier, a supporter of the throne, and a friend of the poor, if not the king's almoner himself. In addition to these qualities, he carried a noble figure, and an open, intelligent countenance, that expressed the feelings of a heart as susceptible of the social affections as it was of the emotions that produced his lawless enterprises.

The interior of Henderland Castle, at this time, was graced by the presence of one of the fairest of women, and the most dutiful and affectionate of wives. The lot of Marjory Scott, the wife of Cockburn, was, indeed, in all respects, save in the possession of a husband she loved devotedly, unfortunately cast; because, in person, mind, and heart, she was formed for gracing the polished drawing-room of refined and civilized life, and imparting to the nursery the charm of a soft, kind, and doting mother, whose love of strict moral discipline was only one phase of her maternal affection. Become the wife of a Border chief from the force of an irresistible early passion, she was as much the domesticated lover of in-door enjoyments, the cultivator of the social affections, and the admirer of love and tranquillity, as if she had occupied a retreat in Arcadia. She had brought her husband three children, all as fair as herself, one girl and two boys, whom she, in playful kind-

ness, declared she would rear in the fear of God, the love of man, and the hearty hatred of Border rieving in all its gradations, from the laird's enforcing of blackmail, to the prowess of the laird's Jock, whose depredations extended to the minutiæ of Laverna's sacrifices :—

> "Baith hen and cock,
> And reel and rock,
> The laird's Jock
> All with him takes."

She had early entertained the expectation that she would cure her husband of his Border practices; and, though she had not as yet succeeded in that hope, she had placed before him such a picture of domestic bliss, in the working influences of all the finer and higher sentiments, seen and heard in the acts and speech of every member of his little family, that he became daily more reconciled to her views of the happiness of life, at the same time that he could not resist the heart-stirring stimulus of a raid, to give him, as he said with a smile, a higher relish for his domestic enjoyments.

A fine family picture, preserved as a legend of the house of Henderland, represents Cockburn and Marjory sitting beneath an immense elm, the only tree of that kind near the castle, and rendered curious on another account, with their three children beside them, engaged in swinging from its branches, and other gambols of innocent childhood. The anxious wife had, for a time, succeeded in her endeavours to keep her husband at home; but, latterly, some indications, on the part of the chief's retainers, having been caught by her vigilant eye, she dreaded another outbreak of that daring spirit which she had not yet been able effectually to quell.

"It will not conceal, Parys," said she, "that there are yet in this bosom, where your Marjory's head has sought the refuge of love, frightened by war, some embers of your

old spirit ready to flame again Is it not so? Love hath sharp eyes. It is not for stag-hunting that your followers are stringing their bows. The love of your old pastime, like that of an old concealed passion, will act in such a manner as defieth all the art of concealment. I noticed, last night, as you spoke to Scott's John, who was booming his bow to show the power of the cord, that the sound went to your heart. Tushielaw oweth you a debt of vengeance. Is it not so? Come, now, confess that it is not for nothing that the old sword points have been risped on the sharping-stone on the ballium?"

"Tush, Marjory!" replied Cockburn, "you alarm the ear of the watchful Helen, who suspendeth her play to listen to her mother's fears. Such is thy training, that our young Hector will lose Henderland before the sods have grown together over his father's grave, in that small burying ground around our chapel. And you have unmanned me too, Maudge. You have much to answer for to the manes of the old Cockburns, who lie sleeping in their quiet beds there, after a jolly life of sturdy stouthrieving from Yarrow to the Esk. What would the laird of Gilnockie say if he heard that Cockburn's bairns were taught to read—ay, and to play on harpsichords, and teylins, and dulcimers. By my faith, Maudge, but he would laugh a good laugh."

"And yet," answered she, "I have seen the clear drop shining in her father's eye as Helen touched the strings to the soft melodies of Auld Scotland. Come, now, Parys, was not that sweet dream dearer to ye than the fever of the strife of Border foray?"

"Ay, Maudge," responded he, "I confess that you have taught me that there is more in man's heart than he himself dreams of. I once thought that the highest of human enjoyments was a victory lost and won, with a hundred head of cattle driven before the returning host, in triumph,

to Henderland; but, in yon withdrawing-room in the west wing, in which your cunning hands have placed the seductive couch, where one may lie and see roses blooming so near that he may smell their odours, and hear witching strains stealing from these musical things of wood and wire, the charm of the foray is broken, and the riever's spirit overcome. I wish I saw old Mangerton twisting his leathern cheeks under these arts of domestic peace. Every tear would have its avenging oath. He would trow old Henderland turret bewitched."

"But you have cunningly led me away from my subject, Parys. Is it not true that you are to cut through my silken bands with the restless sword? Are you not again to turn the fearless eye of the eagle on the cliff where Tushielaw hangs like a beetling crag? Is Helen's song to be changed for the raven war-cry; and the blessings of our peaceful household, for the curses of revengeful war?"

"How high mounteth Hector on my grandfather's elm!" responded Cockburn, playfully, evading her question. "The fearless rogue will hang himself, and realize the prophecy of Merlin the wild, regarding our house—

> 'On Cockburn's elm, on Henderland lee,
> A Cockburn laird shall hangit be.'"

"God forfend!" ejaculated Marjory. "Hector, undo that cord, and descend. My ears ring with old Lailoken's prophetic rhyme, when I look on that swing. I shall have it removed."

"Ha ha!" cried Cockburn, laughing, and glad to get rid of the original topic. "Don't you know, Mause, that my grandsire was a dabbler in phrophetic visions; and, think ye, he would have been fool enough to plant and water, as he is said to have done, his descendant's wuddy? But I have a good mind to cut down the tree, and make Lailoken's prophecy a physical impossibility."

As Cockburn spoke, he cast his eye wistfully to the sky, as if he felt an anxiety as to the state of the weather, an act which did not escape the observation of his wife, on whom the allusion to Merlin's prophecy, generally current at that time, had produced an effect not remarkable at a period when this species of soothsaying still retained the credit it had acquired by the success of the poet of Ercildoun. At another time, her strong mind would not have acknowledged the power of the rythmic ravings of a wandering maniac; but she had got some obscure hints of the wrath of the young King James V. against the Border chiefs; and the tender solicitude of a doting wife traced, by a process perhaps unknown to herself, some connection between Merlin's saying and the proof she now had of a concealed intention, on the part of Cockburn, to disregard all her efforts to reclaim him, by imbuing his mind with a perception of the pleasures of domestic happiness, from his old habits of rieving and fighting with his neighbours.

"It is—it is, Parys," she exclaimed, with a trembling voice—"It is too true that you are bent on the execution of your old threat against Tushielaw. I have an accumulation of proofs against you, and can read it even in your countenance. Do you love me, Parys?—say if you have any love for your Marjory—say if your affection is changed towards those dear pledges of our happiness, who, enjoying the sports of their age, are unconscious that their father is meditating that which may, ere the morn's sun gild those woods, render them fatherless, and bring sorrow o'er the house of Henderland? There are two dangers awaiting you: Tushielaw's arm, that has incarnadined the waters of Ettrick with the blood of many a proud foe; and the vengeance of King James, whose youthful fire his nobles, they say, cannot quell."

"This is not the cry of 'houghs in the pot,' Marjory," replied he, still laughing—"the hint of the Border chief-

tains' wives, when they want more beef for the larder. But calm ye, love. Young James will not travel hither to fulfil old Lailoken's rhyme, and Tushielaw's arm hath no power over Cockburn. Truly, I do intend to weed thy pretty arbours, Maudge; and, peradventure, I may even essay to sing a bass to thy sweet ballad of "Lustye May, with Flora Queen;" and such a domesticated creature shall I be that, like Hercules, you may see me, ere long, ply the distaff—a pretty sight for Adam Scott's warlike eye."

Cockburn's merriment fell with a lurid glare over the heart of his wife, who, seeing him determined to cover his designs by light raillery, replied nothing; but, calling to her her three children, kissed them, and bade them set aside their sports, and return with her to the Castle. As they passed along, Cockburn still cast a wistful eye to the skies, which wore a threatening aspect—the sun having been surrounded in his setting with large folds of clouds, whose bellying forms came dipping near the mountains; while the pale form of the moon, scarcely distinguishable in the falling gloaming, seemed to be sailing through broken masses of vapour, like a labouring bark in a stormy sea; and, now and then, a deep hollow moan among the woods came on the ear, like the far echo of dying thunder. About the Castle, the followers of Cockburn were observed, by the anxious eye of Marjory, to be all secretly employed in repairing their arms or habiliments—an occupation they threw aside, stealthily, when they saw their mistress; but not until she had observed what they had thus endeavoured to conceal. Their countenances exhibited that mixture of repressed joy and affected seriousness which the expectation of being gratified by a luxury from which the heart has long been debarred by some external power, produces in the presence of one hostile to the gratification. So strong was the desire of marauding and spoliation in that distracted part of the country, that an expedition was then

looked upon in nearly the light in which a fair, or maiden-feast, or penny-wedding, would be contemplated by more civilized revellers. These indications Marjory noticed; and, turning up her eyes in the face of her husband, she sighed heavily, and sought her apartment. Soon afterwards she proceeded to put her children to rest, making them offer up to heaven a prayer to avert from the head of their father a danger they did not understand; but enough to them, if they saw it in the face of their mother, whose looks were their laws, and whose smiles were the sunlight of their young hearts.

"This is a prettier sight," muttered she, in soft accents, as she looked upon the faces of the beautiful and innocent supplicants—"this is surely a fairer sight, and better calculated to fill and delight the heart of mortal, than what my Parys is now, I fear, preparing to behold. How different is the expression of the faces of these innocents, upturned to heaven in supplication and thankfulness, from the torch-flared countenances of blood and revenge which these retainers will turn on the heights of Tushielaw, in the presence of their master! Nor is my Parys insensible to this difference; but, wo for the force of education and habit over good hearts! Ask, my little Hector, of your Father in heaven that, if you live to be a Border chief, you may be loyal to your king, and a promoter of peace in the castle, and contentedness and happiness in the cottage."

The little embryo chieftain obeyed the words of his mother; and all looked up in her face anxiously, as they saw the tears stealing down her cheeks. Each asked the cause of her grief, and volunteered an assuagement, as if their little swelling hearts contained the power of the instant amelioration of her sorrow. She looked upon them in silence; and in a little time they were consigned to rest and sleep, and utter oblivion of all the cares of this world.

After these maternal cares, Marjory sat and listened to the proceedings in the ballium of the Castle. Cockburn did not come up, being either occupied in preparations for his expedition against Adam Scott, or unwilling to expose his designs again to the danger of defeat, by the expostulations or entreaties of his anxious wife. Meanwhile, as she listened, every whisper or accidental sound of sword or spear went to her heart, and stirred up, in confused array, the fears of love. One hope remained to her, that the moon would hide her head, and leave the world to the empire of darkness—so unfavourable to the designs of the riever, that the moon's minions would not fight under another power. There were clear indications in the heavens of a coming storm; for the moon still toiled on through the clouds, and the booming of the low, sullen wind in the woods was getting higher and higher. These sounds she hailed with hope; but, the next moment, the clang of a falling spear consigned her to her fears. At a late hour, Cockburn came up to his sleeping-room, and silently retired to pretended rest; while she, with her solicitude increased, retired also to her couch, but with no disposition to become oblivious of the fatal operations of her husband, though her tender nature forbade further efforts in a cause that seemed hopeless. Resigning herself to the powers of fear, and the other disquieting influences of the solemn hour of midnight, she lay quiet, and submitted to the current of inauspicious thoughts that flowed through her mind. A disturbed slumber fell over her, sufficient only to make a slight division between the world of dreams and that of reality, and to allow her waking thoughts to pass in new and changing forms before the eye of the dreaming fancy, which again, in its turn, invested them with attributes suitable to the complexion of her waking sorrows. During this interval, Cockburn rose; and, dressing himself, went quietly out of the chamber—his movements having only

tended to give some new impulse to her half-dreamy sensations, ineffectual as they were to recall her to the cares of a night vigil. A loud crash was the first sound that awoke her; and, opening her eyes, and becoming collected, she recognised, in the sharp sound, the grating fall of the portcullis. A shrill horn now winded among the woods, though its sound was scarcely distinguishable among the repressed bellowings of the night winds that seemed to have risen considerably since she had been overcome by her slumber. She was satisfied that the whole retinue, with her husband at their head, were off to the beetling Castle of Tushielaw, from whose heights so many a riever had been precipitated into the Ettrick.

This conviction, coming, as it did, on the back of a disturbed slumber, in which her dreams had partaken of the dire nature of a nightmare, increased her fears. She could rest no longer, and, rising and dressing herself, she sat down at the casement, and listened to ascertain if any of the sounds of the cavalcade could be distinguished. She could satisfy herself of enough to indicate the route they had taken—away over the hills that separate the vales of Ettrick and Yarrow, and by the path that has since got the name of the King's Road, leading directly to the Tower of Tushielaw. But a quick and threatening change in the weather soon attracted her attention. The booming of the wind seemed to cease, and, shortly after, the clouds, through the openings of which the moon had been seen labouring during the previous part of the night, appeared to run rapidly together, so as to conceal the face of the night queen, and to present a homogeneous mass of dark vapour over all the heavens. A flash of vivid lightning now flared in her eyes, and left her for a moment in suspense whether she had not been blinded by the bright fluid; then on came the peal of thunder, which, reverberating among the mountains like discharges of artillery, filled her

with that peculiar awe which the speaking clouds throw over the hearts of mortals. The rain came down in torrents, and had scarcely begun to pour, when the speat-rills of the high lands were heard dashing down like angry spirits to swell the Henderland Burn and the Megget, and raise the fury of these mountain streams. The sound of the thunder had awoke the children, who, leaving in terror their beds, came running to their mother, to seek that protection which could alone allay their fears. Circling round her knees, they hid their heads among the folds of her clothes, or clambered to her bosom, and twined their arms round her neck. It was in vain she asked them to return to bed; they conceived themselves safer on the breast of their mother, though she still sat at the casement, and the lightning glanced in their eyes, than they could be in their beds, muffled up in the bedclothes, and listening to the successive peals of thunder. As she sat in this attitude, with the children cowering into her bosom, like little chickens under the wing of their mother, she observed that the thunder approached nearer and nearer, as the period between the flash and the peal diminished gradually to a second; and a sudden flash among the trees, accompanied with a crackling noise, connected with some destructive operation of the bolt, indicated that mischief had been done in that quarter of the wood. It was where the elm stood, the subject of Merlin's rhyme; and this circumstance sent the current of her thoughts in that direction, where there was so much aliment for her excited fancy. She silently prayed that the tree might be destroyed; and its towering top, above all others of the wood, held out some hope that her strange wish might be realized.

The sound of a man's voice—that of Dick of the Muir, as he was styled—the individual who kept the gate of the Tower—was heard shouting to some one without, in reply

to some request made by the latter. It was now about two in the morning, and Marjory could not conceive what could be the purpose of the stranger's visit at that dreary hour.

"What want ye wi' my Leddie at this time, man?" said Dick. "My master's frae hame, and my commission doesna extend to opening the gate to strangers on night visits."

"But I'm nae stranger, Dick," replied the other. "I served the Cockburns before ye was born, and hae wandered many a weary step, in the midst o' this storm, to speak a word to the ear o' my Leddie. The time o' my visit is a good sign o' the importance o' my counsel. For God's sake, open, man! or ye may rue this hour to that o' your deein struggle, when Laird and Leddie may be in the moil there, ahint the auld chapel, and a' through the laziness o' their warder."

"Raff i' the mire!" cried the warder—saluting him after the custom of the times, when every man had a distinctive appellation, in the absence of sirnames. "I took ye, man, for ane o' Tushielaw's scouts."

The creaking of the hinges of the gate was now heard.

"What brings ye frae Peebles, man?" continued the warder, "in sic a night as this, when a witch wouldna venture on the Skelf Hill, far less owre North Berwick Law."

"It's no to tell ye that Merlin's elm has fa'en," rejoined Ralph; "but three oaks on three sides o't are lying on the earth, and that stately tree may be a gallows still. You say, Henderland's frae hame. I'm glad o' the news. It's his leddie I want to see: an' she maun be roused frae her couch to speak to her auld servitor. Time bides nae man; neither does King James."

Another peal of thunder drowned the conversation of the man; and Marjory, rousing her little refugees, urged

them to return to their beds, that she might be left to hear the intelligence of this midnight messenger, whose words already, so far as she had heard them, carried tokens of evil. His reference to the king struck a chord that prior solitude had made sensitive; and even the remark as to the tree that had escaped the bolt, had in it a peculiar power over her shattered nerves. Her fears operated upon the children, who, even to the youngest, put strange questions to her.

"Why are you here, mother, in the lightning?" cried Hector.—"And where is my father?" inquired Helen.—"See that flash again!" said Margaret, as she buried her head in her mother's bosom.

"Poor, helpless, little ones!" ejaculated she. "How little know ye that that which fears ye most, is to me the smallest of my terrors! If man's wrath were quenched, heaven's would be easily averted. This messenger's intelligence may seal your fates, and be felt in its consequences to the last term of your lives. Come, loves, to bed. Hear ye that foot in the stair?"

The allusion to a mysterious visitor accomplished what the lightning of heaven could not effect—such is the secret power of mystery over the young heart. Rising from her lap, they hurried away to their beds, and left the not less terrified mother to hear the intelligence of the night messenger. The door opened, and Ralph stood before her.

"God be thanked, my Leddie Cockburn," said he, in a repressed voice, and with fearful looks—"God be thanked, for Henderland's absence! The king, wi' his nobles, are at Peebles, on their way to Liddesdale, to tak vengeance on the chiefs o' the Borders, wha hae been foremost in the foray and the rieving raid. They whisper yonder that there's a hangman in the train, wi' ropes, to hang the ringleaders on their castle buttresses; and Henderland is to be their first victim. O my Leddie! dispatch, quick as thae

flashes o' levin, a messenger to the master, and tell him to flee to England, till the king's wrath has blawn owre. I hae braved this awful storm, auld as I am, to save my master; and, if I but saw him safe frae the king's ire, I could lay my banes at the foot o' the grave o' the Cockburns."

"I have been looking for this Ralph," answered Marjory, as she lifted her hands to seize her hair, in her distress. "Even now, God be merciful! my husband is in the very act of rieving and rebellion. But what said ye of Merlin's Elm, man? Is it not skaithed? Speak, no secrets now; are the trees beside it blasted, and does it stand?"

"I hae heard yer Leddieship laugh at that auld rhyme," replied the servitor. "Fear naething for a madman's freak. But it's true that three oaks by its side are blasted, riven and laid on the earth, and yet it stands."

"Strange, strange are the ways of heaven," cried she, wringing her hands. "Ralph, you must be the messenger to my husband. Haste and saddle my grey jennet, and flee by the Riever's Road, to Tushielaw. Tell Henderland and Adam Scott, that King James comes, with a halter, to avenge the rights of royalty and peace. Cry it forth in the midst of their battle. If he will not flee, take his horse's head, and lead him to England. Away, away, for mercy and Henderland's sake, good Ralph, and whisper in his ear—hark ye, man, 'tis no woman's dream—whisper the fate of Lailoken's tree. The thunder may drown his laugh."

The faithful servant obeyed the command of his former mistress; and, hastening as fast as his old limbs would enable him, mounted Marjory's grey jennet, and was soon out in the midst of the storm. The only remaining servant left in the tower, besides the warder, was, at the same time, despatched, by his half-frantic mistress, to proceed on the road to Peebles, and reconnoitre the king's company,

and convey to her what intelligence he could learn in regard to its movements. By this time it was now about three o'clock; but the morning was still dark, the storm had not abated, the rain still poured, the lightning flashed, and the neighbouring streams rolled over their rugged channels with a noise that equalled the thunder which yet shook the heavens. Marjory again took her seat on the casement; and her fancy, stimulated by her fears, became again busy in the conjuration of images which, however fearful, unhappily stood too great a chance of being realized. The substratum of indisputable facts was itself a good foundation of fear:—The king, angry, and breathing revenge against his rebellious subjects of the Border, was at hand—even within a few miles of her husband's residence; and the ensign of his authority and punishment was borne by the common executioner; then he would detect her husband in the very commission of that rebellious act against which the royal vengeance was to be directed; and, above all, she feared—nay, she was certain, from her knowledge of Henderland's free, bold spirit, that he would disdain to fly, and would at once commit himself into the hands of a young incensed monarch, who had travelled forty miles for his blood. These were fearful, incontrovertible facts, and they were contemplated by a solitary female in the dark hour of night, in the midst of one of the fiercest storms that had ever visited that part of the country, and under the blue lights of a fancy that, in spite of the appeals of judgment, reverted to an old prophecy of a wonderful being, which seemed to have been respected even by the lightning of heaven: the elm still stood; its brethren of the forest had fallen; and the rope to be attached to it was on its way to Henderland. Fearful forebodings took possession of her mind; and, as her fears rose higher and higher, she looked out in the dark, while the gleams of lightning played round her couch, and every

sound that differed from the roaring of the storm arrested her ear, and kept her on the rack of painful anxiety. Her little children, meanwhile, who had caught sympathetically her fears, and could not divine the cause of their mother's vigil by the window in a thunder storm, had renounced sleep; and, disregarding her efforts to restrain them, must see her at intervals, and question her again and again; and even from their sleeping apartment they sent their exclamations of fear, and aggravated, by their sorrows and terror, the misery of their mother.

In this condition Marjory remained for another hour. There was no stir in the tower, where a female domestic or two lay, or slipped about, under the weight of a fear, the cause of which had not been explained to them. The silence internally, broken at times by the cries of the restless children, formed a strange and awe-inspiring contrast to the turmoil without, where darkness and the storm still held sway over the earth. Oppressed by the sight of the black heavens, she yet trembled to look for the first glimpse of dawn, which might be soon expected to be seen struggling through the vapours of the storm. Light would bring the king and the executioner; and she prayed that she might have an opportunity of seeing her husband before the arrival of the royal cavalcade, that she might fall on her knees, and implore his instant flight into England; but her ears caught no sounds in the direction of Tushielaw, save the thunder and the rain, and, at intervals, the scream of the drenched owl or frightened hawk, or the wheep of the restless lapwing, driven from the morass by the overwhelming torrent. Then came the cry again, of "Mother, mother!" from her sleepless children, responded to by her own, "Hush, hush, my darlings! your father cometh!" when her pained ear sought again the direction of Peebles, and she trembled as her fancy suggested the sound of hoof or horn.

Thus another hour passed, and her racked feelings were still uncheered by a glimpse of hope. The strength of her soul seemed to have passed into the physical organs of the eye and ear; and every change, from darkness or silence, produced exacerbations of her fear, and painful apprehension. The faint shade of light in the eastern heavens, which gave tokens of the approaching dawn, might be a precursor of the king and his retinue; and as her eye fell upon it, she listened again for the coming tread. A very faint sound was now heard, and it was too evident that it came not from Tushielaw; it was from the direction of Peebles, and it sounded as if it were the tread of a horse. It must be, she instantly thought, the scout of the king's cavalcade; for, in her painful anxiety, she had forgotten her own messenger. The step approached nearer and nearer; and more intense, in the same degree, grew her apprehension, till the sound of her messenger's voice, calling the warder, struck her ear—and she imagined she never heard a voice so hollow and ominous of death. The man was admitted, and his heavy step up the spiral stair, flustering in the toil of a vain precipitude in the dark entrance, declared the impatience of his intelligence.

"Ah! my Leddie," said he, as he ran forward, breathlessly and fearfully, "Ralph spoke truth. The king's party will be at the castle in less time than an eagle may flee frae Dunyon to Ruberslaw. I hae seen them. They carry torches to shew them the hill-paths, and keep them oot o' the saft bogs. The light shone fearfully on the hill-sides, and the clatter o' their horses' hoofs rang in my ears I had seen enough, and made the greatest speed to bring the ill news."

"Cockburn, Cockburn," ejaculated the disconsolate wife, "what power may now save ye from thy fate? His proud spirit will disdain flight—ay, and prompt a meeting with his executioner. What has become of Ralph? Every-

thing conspires toward the ruin of my hopes. You must to Tushielaw, Thomas, and give a second warning to your master. Tell him of this torch-light progress of the royal executioner, and warn him again to fly for his life, and the life of one who lives through him. Yet, stay—shall I not go myself? One messenger hath failed already—shall a wife fail in the cause of her husband's life?"

"The mountain torrents are swelled, my Leddie," replied Thomas of the Woodburn, "an' will be noo sweepin owre the Riever's Road, carryin baith man an' horse to the howes; an' nane but an auld hill-roadster may ken the richt tract frae that to ruin in the midst o' the darkness. Ye micht as weel try to pass the Brig o' Dread, my Leddie. Yer bonnie body wad be fund a corpse wi' the mornin's licht, an' Cockburn, pardoned by the king maybe, micht greet owre't. Besides, ye should be here. A woman's voice turns awa meikle wrath."

"Away, then, yourself, good Thomas!—I believe your counsel is good. Heaven speed the message! Cockburn's delay gives me a glimmer of hope, that Ralph hath already turned his head to England. If so be it, you will report to me privately, and away from the ear of the king's followers. If not, and if he cometh to meet the king, heaven look down in mercy on these poor children, who still cry for their mother, and will not rest!"

Thomas obeyed; and, as she turned to comfort her children, before she again betook herself to her weary station, she heard the clatter of the horse's heels over the gateway, The restlessness of her little ones pained her: she imagined she saw, in their instinctive anxiety and fear, some presage of coming evil, whereby, before another night, they might be orphans; and all her efforts to remove the impression only tended to confirm it—thus strangely and fantastically prophetic, is the apprehensive heart. After again assuring them that their father was coming, she sought her seat

at the casement; and saw, now, the grey dawn, throwing a stronger light over the bleak hills, and exhibiting the white, foaming cataracts, dashing from brae to brae! Any hope of seeing Cockburn, now, before the coming of the king, had gradually dwindled away, and was extinct; and she as much feared to hear a sound from the direction of Tushielaw, as she, an hour before, was anxious for that indication of her husband's approach. Every instant she might expect to hear the tramp of the king's horses; nothing could avert that sound from her ear, or prevent it beating upon her heart. It came at last; she heard it audibly, mixed with the discordant jingle of armour, and striking her ear at the same time that a horrid glare of torch-light pierced the deep wood, and arrested her eye. In a few minutes more, a trumpet sounded a shrill blast; the feet of many restless horses raised a confused noise, that was mixed with broken, under-toned ejaculations, and clanking of swords and bucklers, and, after a minute or two of comparative silence, came the high tones of a herald's voice, demanding admittance in the name of King James. The warder repaired to his mistress, and got his answer. The gate was opened, and Marjory saw the cavalcade enter the base court surrounding the castle; while two large bodies of soldiers, coming up about the same time, took their stations on each side of the entrance. A circle was now formed by those who were within the court; and the grim faces of the nobles, as they reflected the glare of the torches, were revealed clearly to her gaze. In the middle stood the young king, in close and secret counsel with his confidential advisers, and, at last, the warder was called before his Majesty, to account for the absence of his master, tell where he had gone, and record his proceedings. The man reluctantly obeyed the call.

"Where is thy master, sirrah?" inquired the king.

The warder was silent, and the question was repeated in sterner tones.

"I keep only this castle, your Highness," replied the warder; "my master is his ain keeper—an' a better there's no between the twa Tynes."

"Thou art a good keeper of thine own tongue, at least," said James, angrily; "but we come not from court unprepared with remedies for opening the mouths of close-hearted seneschals. Let Litheraig attend."

An opening was now made in the circle of nobles, and a man, dressed in a long black doublet, came forward, holding in his hands a rope, ready to be suspended, and to suspend, in its turn, the disobedient warder.

"Throw thy cord over the buttress, there, cried one of the nobles; "give the noose mouth enough to tell its own tale, and I will answer for it bringing out his."

The man proceeded forward to a buttress of the castle, completely exposed to the eyes of Marjory, by the gleams that flared from the torches; and she saw him deliberately go through the operation of making the projection available for the purpose of a gallows, by binding the cord to it, and suspending a running noose, which seemed to gape in grim gesture for its victim. The moment the rope was suspended, James pointed to it, and asked the warder to proceed and answer his questions. The terrified man cast a wild eye on the relentless crowd around him, and then on the engine of death that dangled before him, and, with faltering tongue, told the king that Cockburn had gone on a midnight raid against Adam Scott of Tushielaw, who, some time before, had made an assault on Henderland, and carried off twenty head of cattle, besides wounding several of Cockburn's men; he stated, farther, that there had been many raids of late in Liddesdale; but that his master had had, until Tushielaw roused him, scarcely any share in these struggles, preferring the society of his lady,

the fairest and the kindest woman of the Borders, to the pleasures of rieving. This statement was received as evidence against Cockburn.

All these transactions had been narrowly watched by Marjory, who was now more and more satisfied that the doom of her husband was sealed, if he made his appearance before the king in the humour he now exhibited. She saw them bind the warder with ropes until their trial was over, that he might remain in pledge for the truth of his statements; and the heads again held counsel on the next step they should take in the unexpected event of the "traitor," as they called him, not being found at home, notwithstanding of their attempted surprise by a night visit. These doings had occupied as much time as allowed the glimmer of early dawn to pass into a grey light, that, while it did not render the torches unnecessary, exhibited in strange and grotesque shades the group of dark figures, their changing faces, moving heads, and inauspicious gestures, on which the gleams of the torches flickered faintly, in struggles with the rising morn. Above them, the dangling noose claimed her averted eye, and sent through her nerves shivers that seemed to make the blood run back in the veins, and stagnate about the heart. In any other position but that in which she was placed, she would have made the castle ring with involuntary screams; and it was only the intense anxiety with which she watched every sound in the distance, in the struggling hope that Cockburn would not make his appearance, that bound her down in the silent, breathless mood which she now exhibited. Neither could she have borne the extraordinary spectacle below her casement, had it not been that her wish to watch every indication in the direction of Tushielaw, overcame the feelings inspired by the moving tumult of fierce men that waited there for the blood of her husband. Sometimes the thought found its way through her anxiety

—why did they not call for or visit her? But the solution was not difficult; for she knew that men bent on purposes of cruelty, do not court the mediation of women. And then again she meditated, for a moment, a descent to them, and an attempt, by throwing herself at the feet of the king, to secure, by anticipation, mercy to her husband, when he might, if ever he should, be found. This last thought was passing through her mind, and she had intuitively drawn her clothes around her bosom, as a preparation for her rising resolution, when her husband's horn, in all its well-known windings, struck her ear. That sound had hitherto inspired the pulses of a living heart, and sent through her veins the delightful tumult of a gratified hope; it had been the prelude to the close embrace of affection; the flourish of joy on the meeting again of separated hearts. It was now the death-knell of both. She would have sunk to the ground as the sound fell on her ear, but that the recess of the casement sustained her powerless frame. After a few moments of insensibility, she again opened her eyes; and the first vision that presented itself to her, was her husband marching into the castle between two rows of the king's troops. He came nobly forward, with a free, erect carriage, and a look undaunted by the scowls that fell on him from every side. On coming up to the king, who stood in a haughty, indignant attitude, he was prepared to throw himself at his feet, when his eye caught the rope, with the noose at the end of it, hanging from the buttress. He started, and threw a hurried look up to the casement, where Marjory sat watching his every movement; but his fortitude returned again, and making a step forward, he threw himself at the feet of the king.

"Here doth an humble subject," he said, "deposit the loyalty he oweth to his lawful king."

"On the eve, or in the midst of rebellion," cried James,

in ironical anger. "Seize the rebel! One caught in the act, maketh a good beginning. Four reigns of Jameses have been merely borne or suffered, by beggarly tolerance, by these Border sovereigns, and the best part of a kingdom made an arena for the strife of the contention of petty kings, who rob, and steal, and kill on all hands, heedless whether the victim be king or knave. This shall be ended —by the faith of Scotland's king it shall! 'Habit and repute,' is good evidence by our old law against common thieves; and I ask my nobles, too good a jury for such caitiffs, what a common thief deserves?"

"To be strung up to the buttress," replied several voices, in deep hollow sounds, that rung fearfully round the recesses of the ballium, and reached the ear of Marjory.

"Parys Cockburn of Henderland," cried James, "hath, by a jury of our nobles, been deemed worthy to die the death of a thief, and a rebel against our authority. Let him be forthwith hanged till he be dead, on the buttress of his own tower, as an example to evil doers in time to come."

A quick movement of simultaneous, and, in many cases, intuitive agitation, followed this order. Two men seized the unfortunate gentleman, and proceeded to bind his hands behind his back, while the executioner proceeded to let go the end of the rope, so as to bring within his reach the noose, which had previously been purposely elevated, so as to be more exposed to the eyes of the beholders. Every step of these proceedings was observed by Marjory from her seat at the window; and it was not till she saw the men lay hold of her husband, and the executioner proceed to adjust the rope, that she ceased to be able to watch the details of this extraordinary mock trial and real condemnation. At that moment she uttered a loud scream, and fell on the floor in a state of insensibility,

from which she was roused by her little daughter, Helen, who had come from her bed to ascertain her mother's illness. Rising in a state of frenzy, she sought the door of the apartment, with a view to throw herself between the king and her husband; but the door was locked in the outside—a precaution, doubtless, taken by the king's orders, to prevent a scene of a woman's unavailing grief. The prospect, now, of being forced to remain in a chamber a few feet above the gallows on which her husband, and the object of her strongest and softest affections, was to be suspended, and hanged like a common malefactor, rose on her bewildered view. Though she might place her hands over her eyes, the *sound* of his death would reach her ear —the jerk of the fatal cord, the struggle of the choking breath, the last sigh of her beloved Parys, would come to her, and reason might remain to bear it. If she could close up both eyes and ears, her fancy would exaggerate the acts performing around her, and fill her mind with shapes and forms, if possible more hideous than the dread spectres of the waking sense. Breaking loose from Helen, and also from Hector—who had joined his sister, and had from the window got some glimpse of the dire operations in progress in the court, and thus ascertained the cause of his mother's scream—she ran round the apartment, in the way of unfortunate maniacs, till her brain became dizzy with the quick circumgyrations, and then stood ready to fall, staring wildly at her children, who had followed her in her progress with loud screams. Meanwhile, the buzz of the preparations for the execution fell on her ear, and, running to the window, she held forth her extended arms, and implored the king, in wildly pathetic words and moans, to spare her husband. The king never moved his head; but many of the men turned up their grim, embrowned faces, fixed their eyes on her beautiful countenance, and saw her white arms wildly sawing the air,

without showing any indications of being moved. Cockburn himself, who stood with his arms bound behind his back, his armour off, and the neck of his doublet rolled down on his shoulders, could not trust his eye in the direction of his wife and children, but stood with a look fixed on the grey walls of his tower. The voice of the king was now heard, crying, "Is everything prepared?" and, "Yes, my liege," rolled forth from the mouth of the rough-toned executioner. The unfortunate Marjory, in this extremity, turned from the window, and rushed into a neighbouring room, from which a few steps of descent led to a window not so far removed from a broken part of the wall as to prevent her getting to the ground. In this, by a mighty effort, she succeeded, hearing, as she hastened away, the shrill cries of her children following her, and imploring her to return. Her brain was fired beyond the capability of sane thought. The soldiers, who saw her fall on the ground, lifted her up, and then pushed her rudely away from the ground they were ordered to guard, confronting her otherwise impossible efforts to get forward by their swords, and threatening to do her bodily injury if she dared to resist their authority.

At this moment she heard a voice commanding some one to seize and confine the wife of the culprit; and, getting more confused by the occurrence of new and more harrowing incidents—the cries of her children sounding from the window—the noise of those forwarding the execution, if not at that very time, binding her husband to the gallows, filling all the air with a confused buzz—and the coming of the men to seize and secure her—she sprang forward out of a postern, and, with the rapid step of flying despair, endeavoured to get beyond the dreadful sounds which haunted her ear. In her flight—the consequence of the spur of frenzy, as much as of a wish to lessen pain which was insufferable—she came to the Henderland Linn,

a mountain stream, that falls rolling down the heights with a loud noise. It was much swelled, and the waters were gushing and roaring over a ledge of rock that crosses its course, and forms in that quarter a cascade—beautiful in certain states of the river, but frightful when the spirit of the storms has sent down the red stream to dash over the height. The noise was welcome to her; and, exhausted, she threw herself down on a seat by the side of the linn;* yet, so quick is the ear to catch, through other sounds, that of the cause of a pregnant grief, that she heard the increased noise of the crowd at the Castle, consequent on the execution of the sentence of condemnation of her husband—a swelling shout, as of a completed triumph, came on the wind; and, unable to bear this consummation of all her woes, she ran forward, and threw herself down with her head in the line of the cascade, that the roar of the waters might drown the dreadful sound.

How long she lay in that extraordinary predicament, she was never able to tell; but the sound of the roaring waters rang in her ear for many an after day. When she ventured to raise her head, everything seemed quiet at Henderland Tower; and the silence now appeared to her more dreadful than the former excitement. The storm, which had been gradually ceasing, was lulled, and the morn had now attained to a grey daylight. She knew not what step to pursue. She would remain, and she would not remain; she would return to the Tower, and she trembled at the thought. Starting up, she began to retrace her steps slowly back through the wood, stopping at every interval of a few moments, to listen if she could hear any sound. Looking around, she saw, disappearing from an old road that led away to Tushielaw, the last of the king's troops; and she omened sadly that they had completed their work. She hesitated again, whether she should proceed to a place

* Few travellers on the Borders have passed unnoticed the "lady's seat."—Ed.

where she would inevitably behold a sight that might unsettle her reason. But whether could she fly? What could she do? Her little children were there; it was still her home, and the dead body of her beloved husband was also there. But judgment might vacillate according to its laws; her feet had an impulse forward, which philosophy might not explain. She was hastening towards the Castle, and she scarcely knew that she was occupied in that act, in the absence of distinct volition. Looking up, she saw an old domestic running towards her; who, on coming up, wished her to relinquish her determination to go towards the Castle, and requested her to sojourn for a time in the woods, or wait till she sent for a jennet, to carry her to some house. She would give no explanation of her reasons for this advice; but looked terrified and confused when Marjory put to her some broken words of interrogation. Marjory could abide no parley, and, gently pushing the old attendant aside, hurried forward to the Castle, and entered the postern. The ballium was empty; the retainers of her husband had been marched off before the forces of the king; and any domestics that were left had fled to the woods in terror. She lifted her eye to the buttress, and saw suspended there the dead body of her husband. At the window of her apartment were her children, looking on the dreadful spectacle. The two elder had cried till their throats were dried and paralysed; and the youngest, who understood nothing of these proceedings, laughed when it saw its mother, and clapped its little hands for joy.

A knife, that lay alongside the place of execution, was seized by the unhappy wife; and, through a loophole that was opposite to the rope, she stretched her hand, and severed the fatal cord. The body fell with a crash upon the ground. Life was extinct; but who would convince the frantic wife that her beloved Parys was gone for ever?

She hung upon the dead body till, as the day advanced, the terrified domestics came in, and took her away from the harrowing spectacle. Force had to be applied to effect the humane purpose; and, for many a night, the screams that came from the west wing of Henderland spoke eloquently the misery of this child of misfortune. Cockburn was buried in the chapel ground near the Tower. Some time afterwards, when her grief could bear the recital, she wished to know what took place between her husband and the two messengers on that dreadful night—and she was gratified by the intelligence. Scott of Tushielaw had got intelligence of Cockburn's intentions, and was upon the watch to defend his property. A severe conflict ensued, in which several men on both sides were severely wounded. In the very midst of the fray, Ralph rode up to Cockburn, and delivered his message; but the proud chief replied, that he would face King James if he were the Prince of Evil himself; but that he could not pay his respects to his king till he first humbled the proud Tushielaw. A like effort was made by Thomas, and with a similar result. In fact, it appeared that Cockburn entertained no fear of danger from the visit of the king, and treated the story of the gallows' rope as a mere vision of some terrified mind; at least, if he had any doubts on that subject—and reports of the fiery temper of the king might have roused his suspicions—he conceived that a bold bearing would do him more good than a pusillanimous demeanour; and, as for flight, he despised it, as well as disapproved of it, on grounds of fancied prudence, seeing that he would thereby admit his guilt, and prove his pusillanimity, while it might ultimately turn out that the king's intentions were not hostile, whereby he would be exposed to the ridicule and scorn of both king and subjects. Having beat off Scott's retainers, and secured in this way, as he thought, a fancied victory, he marched direct on to his own Tower; and,

as he approached, sounded his horn in his usual way, to tell his wife that he entertained no fear, and to impress upon the mind of the king the boldness of the innocence of a man who had only been performing an act of self defence, in teaching an old enemy that he would not commit an assault upon him again with impunity.

In the course of time, Marjory Cockburn recovered slightly from the effects of these terrible visitations, and often she expressed her surprise that Lailoken's prophecy about the elm tree had not been proved by the events of that night; but some people thought that King James, who knew the prophecy well, wished to reduce the credit of soothsaying, and therefore hanged Cockburn on the buttress of the Tower, instead of the tree. Her little children played, as usual, round her; and, if a relenting fate had had in reserve any means for alleviating her grief, surely they might have been found in the prattle of innocence, and the hopes of a mother; but it was not ordained that she should be thus relieved. Every day saw a change on her; she gradually declined, till she took on the appearance of a skeleton. About three years after the death of Cockburn, Marjory died, doubtless, of that disease which (though discredited by many altogether) kills more mortals than typhus itself—a broken heart. The property had previously been escheated to the king, and the name of the Cockburns of Henderland never flourished again. She was buried in the grave of her beloved Parys; and some relation, who knew the loves and misfortunes of the pair, caused the foresaid stone to be erected, with the inscription we have copied, and shall copy again—"Here lie Parys of Cockburn. and his wife Marjory."

## THE EXPERIMENTER.

No one who has escaped an imminent danger can resist the impulse that compels him to look back upon it, although the recollection harrows up his soul. It is now nearly thirty years since the events of which I write occurred; still they are as indelibly impressed upon my memory as the felon's brand upon his brow. It has rarely been the fortune of those miserable beings to whose number I had a narrow escape from adding one, to retain so lively a recollection of a long train of mental anguish. Even at this lengthened period from the occurrence of the events referred to, in my solitary walks, or when sleep forsakes my pillow, they will embody themselves, and pass in vivid succession over my mind; tears unbidden fill my eyes, and my heart melts in gratitude for my deliverance from so sad a fate—carried out under the cloud of night, buried like a dog, within sea-mark, or in the boundary of two proprietors' lands—entailing disgrace upon my family, and a horror of my memory, even scaring the simple husbandman from the neighbourhood of the spot where my ashes lay.

I was the only child of an aged father, the last of a family who had, in former days, been of no small consequence in that part of the country where he resided; but before his day, the numerous acres of land his forefathers had possessed owned other lords. All he inherited was the respect of the old people, and the tradition of former grandeur. His elder brother, of a more enterprising turn of mind, at their father's death had sold off the wrecks of a long train of mismanaged property, divided the proceeds between

himself and my father, and, after an affectionate adieu, set off for the West Indies. My father, less enterprising, remained where all his affections were fixed, and farmed a few acres from one of the new proprietors—void of ambition, content to glide down the stream of life unknowing and unknown by the busy world, all his cares concentrated on me, whom he intended for the church, and educated accordingly. For several years, and until misfortunes pressed so heavily upon him, he maintained me at college. When his means failed, I returned to my disconsolate parents, to consult how I should now proceed—whether to go out to Jamaica to my uncle, or commence teacher. My father had applied to his brother for aid in his difficulties, and been refused. The fears of my mother, and the wounded pride of my father determined my fate—I commenced teacher, and succeeded equal to my ambition.

My income was small; but my habits were simple and temperate, and my means supplied my wants abundantly. From the first dawnings of reason, my mind was of a studious, inquisitive turn; I thirsted after knowledge of every kind; and, while ardent in all my pursuits, I was of a joyous and hoping disposition. All was sunshine to me; even the blighting of my prospects at college affected not a mind which felt a consciousness of being able to soar to any height; a thousand projects floated through it, each of which, for a season, seemed sufficient to rear me to the pinnacle of fortune and fame. Thus had I dreamed on for three years. One of my many objects of study engrossed the greater portion of my thoughts—the mysterious tie that united soul and body. Could I untie this Gordian knot—and I was vain enough to hope I might—then would I rank amongst earth's brightest ornaments, and fill a niche with Newton and Bacon. This extraordinary subject had even when at school, engaged the greater part of my thoughts. Often have I left my fellows at play, and stolen

to some distant part of the churchyard, to muse and commune with myself, not without a boyish hope that some kind tenant of the tomb would reveal to me his mighty secret. Void of fear, I have implored the presence of spirits under the cloud of night. The feeling that filled my mind was an enthusiasm, which, though years and changes have rolled over my head, is still remembered with a sensation of pleasure.

I had kept my school for three years, to the satisfaction of the parents of my pupils and my own. My cup of enjoyment was full to overflowing. I had proceeded so far with several works of science; every one of which, ere I began, was to establish my fame, but each was quickly abandoned for some new idea. I had resumed again the first object of my inquiry, and was busily arranging materials for effecting the glorious discovery, when I was seized by an epidemic fever that was committing fearful ravages in the parish. All after this, for several weeks, is a blank in my memory, a hiatus in my consciousness. Contrary to the expectations of all that attended, I became convalescent. My strength slowly returned; but my mind had undergone a complete change: its buoyancy had fled, and no longer, like a butterfly, fluttering from one flower of fancy to another, it was fixed on the one engrossing object; yet I was conscious that the faculties of which I had once felt so proud, were now weak as those of an infant; and, dreamy and listless, I began to wander into the fields. My school had broken up. The greater part of my pupils were with a successful competitor who now supplied my place. This deepened my gloom; and I often returned with a feeling that my task on earth was accomplished—that all that remained for me was to die—that I was a cumberer of the earth. I never complained, but bore all in silence. I cared not for myself; but when I looked to my parents, I resolved to struggle on; and did

struggle manfully. I felt as a drowning man, who sees an object almost within his reach, that, were he enabled to grasp it, would secure his safety. He struggles and plunges towards it in vain, every succeeding effort only serving to diminish his hopes of escape, while, by allowing himself to sink in the stream, he would cease to suffer in a moment. To the eye of a casual observer, I had regained my wonted health, neither was there any strong indication of the change that had come over my feelings; yet to speak or act was painful to me, and I could not endure to be looked at with more than a passing glance—shrinking like a criminal, and fearing lest the thoughts that were passing in my mind might be discovered.

A strange sensation had, for some time, taken possession of me. I felt as if in a false position, by some means or other, to me inscrutable—that I had, at some former period of existence, either on this earth or some other planet, lived, acted, and witnessed, as I was now doing. Nothing appeared new to me: every incident of unwonted occurrence produced a dreamy effect of memory, as if I had experienced it before. This frame of mind was more annoying than painful, for I even at times felt a faint pleasure in it, and strove to anticipate events that were lodged in the womb of futurity: but my efforts were vain; I could not penetrate the mist; I could only recognise the objects as it cleared away.

At this time I was so fortunate as to procure the situation of amanuensis to a literary gentleman, who was employed upon a work of great extent, but of little interest. My labour was entirely mechanical. The confinement and the sedentary nature of my employment wrought still greater change on me; for hours I have sat, like an automaton, copying passages I felt no interest in, held only to my task by the consciousness of being no longer burthensome to my parents. An entire new train of ideas began to pass

through my mind in rapid succession; some of them so fearful and horrid that I trembled for myself. I felt as if impelled to crime by some power almost irresistible, and a strange pleasure in meditating upon deeds of blood took possession of me. My favourite subject, the mysterious connection between soul and body, was again strong upon me, and I longed to witness the last agonies of a person dying by violence. It was necessary to elucidate my theory, and the desire to obtain the knowledge, increased. The crime and all its horrors never occurred to me as any thing but a great, a magnanimous action, a sacrifice of my own feelings for the benefit of mankind.

One evening my employer detained me much later than he was wont. We sat as usual—he at one side of the table, I at the other. I had, all the afternoon, been much stronger than I had for some time before, and felt more confidence in myself than I had done for several weeks. No sensation gave indication of the misery that was to fill my heart. All at once my mind was hurled, as if by a whirlwind, from its calm. My employer stooped over a book, in which he was deeply engaged—his head was towards me. I was mending my pen with a stout, ivory-handled desk-knife. The temptation came upon me, with hideous force, to plunge the knife into his head, and obtain the great object I so long had desired. In this fearful moment I even reasoned—if I dare use the often-abused term—that the wound would be small, and hidden by the hair, so that no man could ever know, far less blame me for the act. I grasped the knife firmly in my hand, changing it to the best position to strike with effect. My mind felt pleased and happy. I actually exulted in the opportunity. My arm was raised to strike the unconscious victim of my madness, when he raised his head, and looked me in the face. I sank into my seat, with a faint scream, and wept like a babe. The impulse had passed away, like a hideous

nightmare. I shook in every limb, and raised my eyes to heaven, imploring pardon, and sighed forth a mental prayer of thanks; while the intended victim of my madness, unconscious of the danger he had escaped, did his utmost to soothe the agitation and distress which I could not conceal. I could no longer look upon his benign and placid countenance without a shudder of horror, such as the wretch must feel who is dragged to the spot where the body of his murdered victim lies witnessing against him. I felt that he was a victim snatched from me by a merciful God—a victim I had murdered in my heart. That same night I gave up my situation, much against the desire of my kind employer, and returned to my parents' roof, the most to be pitied of living men.

For several days I never left my bed, and scarcely took any food. My mind felt, at times, quite confused; at other times, strange ideas shot transitorily through it, with the vividness of lightning; but they were only coruscations, and left no impressions. I forgot them as quickly as they arose, and sank again into gloom. My malady began gradually to assume a new turn. Phantoms began to visit me; the sages of antiquity were my guests. I hailed them, at first, with pleasure, and enjoyed their presence, but soon grew weary of the voiceless, fleeting communion. In vain I spoke to them, or put questions in the most impassioned tones. No sound ever met my ear save my own. Yet there was a strange community of sentiment—an intercourse of soul between us; for they would shoot their ideas in through my eyes—smile, or look grave—and nod, assent, or shake the head, as various thoughts passed through my mind. After the first visits, I ceased to use articulated language; it was a joyless communion, a languid inanity, and I felt as if my own soul was no longer a dweller in its earthly tabernacle, but held a mysterious middle state between life and death. In vain I endeavoured to exert

my energies. I left my bed, and began to move about; still this new torment clung to me. I possessed a strange power. I had only to think of any event in history, and the whole was present before me, even the scenes around becoming changed to the places where the circumstances happened. I wished my memory annihilated; I strove not to think. My very endeavours called up more vividly new and strange ideas; wherever I was, the place seemed peopled by phantoms. Wherever I turned my eyes, a moving pageant of gorgeous or hideous figures, strangely real, were before me.

Oh, how I loathed my situation! Yet I complained to no one—not even to my parents; enduring all in secret, and hearing the bitter taunts of friends and acquaintances, who passed their heart-cutting remarks upon my indolence, and strange way of passing my time. To the eye of a casual observer, I was in good health, and shrunk from making known my painful and unheard-of state, lest I should be considered insane, and treated as such, by being placed in confinement—an idea that made me shudder. I often doubted my own sanity; yet I felt not like ordinary madmen. I had a consciousness that I was under some strong delusion, and what I saw could not be real; still, my visions were not the less annoying and painful. The only intervals of rest I enjoyed, was when the desire to witness the last expiring throb of a person dying by violence haunted me, which it did at times, if possible, with more overwhelming force than ever. This was the more unaccountable to me, for I am naturally of a humane and benevolent disposition; and, when not overpowered by a gust of passion, timid and averse to acts of strife and violence of any kind—shuddering and becoming faint at the sight of blood. My mental sufferings, from these conflicts between my natural turn of mind and its morbid state, became so great, that life grew a burden more than I

could long endure. Still, I shrunk from self-destruction; or, more properly speaking, the thought never occurred to me; for, had it come with half the force of the others by which I was enslaved, I would have, in a moment, obeyed the impulse. I had no idea of any crime, or a wish to witness the sufferings of the individual. I felt as a patriot might feel who sacrifices all for the good of his country—immolating my own feelings at the altar of science, and deeming the realization of my dreams of vital importance to mankind, who had hitherto been unable to discover the mysterious link that bound soul and body together.

At length, the thought came into my distracted mind that I might be able to try the great experiment upon myself; and a sensation near akin to joy came over me, as I turned over the various ways in which this might be accomplished. My whole invention was at work, contriving the safest mode in which I could approach nearest, without crossing "that bourne from whence there is no return;" and I felt, for days, all the pleasures and disappointments of a projector, adapting or rejecting the various schemes by turns. Bred at a short distance from the beach, I swam well. To fasten a weight to my body, sufficient to sink me, with a knife in my hand, to cut the cord as the last pang came upon me, and then rise to the surface, often presented itself, and was as often rejected. I might be so weak, as not to rise, or, in my confusion, I might stab myself in my effort to cut the cord, and the secret would be lost. At length, I fixed upon the following mode. Unknown to my parents or any one, I prepared the little room I had occupied from childhood, and, with a feeling of pride, called my study, by carefully securing from it all access of air, as far as was in my power; then, attaching a cord to the door and window, so contrived that the slightest pull would throw them wide open, I placed a chair in the centre of the room, and a chaffer of burning

charcoal by its side. With a feeling of exultation, I sat down to complete my experiment. The cords were fixed to my arms, so that, when I fell from my seat unconcious, the door and window would open, and restore animation by the access of vital air. I would thus attain my object, without exposing myself, or becoming the subject of public remark, which at all times was most hateful to me. I watched every mutation of feeling. For the first few minutes, I felt no change, except that the room became warmer and more agreeable. Gradually my breathing became more quick; but not in the least laboured. A gentle perspiration came upon me, accompanied by a luxurious languor, such as if I had ate a plentiful dinner, and stretched myself upon a sunny bank; an irresistible desire to sleep was stealing over me. My feelings were highly pleasing; but a stupor gradually came over me, and banished thought. My next sensation was a thrill of agony, which no words can express. It was more intense than if thousands of pointed instruments had been thrust into every muscle of my body—plucked out, and again thrust in, with the rapidity of lightning. Thrilling coruscations of vivid light flashed across my eyes. I attempted to shriek —only a faint groan escaped; my organs of voice refused to obey their office. Human nature could not continue to suffer as I suffered. Again I sank into unconsciousness, and again my agony came on me, though not so intense as before. Faint glimmerings of thought began to visit me. The first was that the agonies of death were upon me; that I was in danger of sitting too long; and, with a convulsive effort I attempted to throw myself from the chair, but felt I was restrained. Opening my eyes, I found them dim and visionless; a dull and benumbing sensation made me feel as if my brain was bursting my head; whether it was day or night I could not distinguish; my ears were filled with confused sounds, mixed with a hissing and

booming that distracted me; I felt faint and sick, so as I never felt before or since. That I was dying, I firmly believed; and again I attempted to sink from off the chair. As consciousness returned, I found myself stretched upon my bed. Still, all was darkness and confusion, I fell into a lethargy or sleep, which lasted for hours

When I awoke, my mother sat weeping by the side of my bed; her suppressed sob was the first sound that fell upon my ear. Never can I forget that moment!—her melting woe, as she sat stooping towards me; the anguish expressed in my father's countenance, as he stood supporting himself upon the back of her chair, his eyes bent on my face. I turned myself upon my pillow, and gave vent to a flood of tears.

Before a word had been exchanged, the surgeon, to whose exertions I was indebted for my restoration to life, entered. To his inquiries after me, my mother answered, that, for the last few hours, I had been in a quiet sleep, and had just moved and turned as if I had awakened; but that, agreeable to his desire, she had not spoken to me. Without answering her, he stooped over the bed to feel my pulse. I turned to him, and inquired what had happened. A mutual explanation took place. That I had attempted suicide, both he and my parents believed, until, to vindicate myself, I gave them a minute account of the object I had in view in what I had done. He listened with intense interest, not unmixed with astonishment, as he gradually drew from me an account of my long train of mental anguish. I could at once perceive that he did not ridicule me, but rather sympathised with me, and blamed me much for not making my case known long before, as it was not, he hoped, beyond the reach of medicine. He told me of several cases in which he had been successful, nearly similar to my own, although not to the extent of duration and variety of change. The

following, which had nearly been as fatal, and would have been as inexplicable, made the greatest impression on me.

The subject of his narrative was the wife of a near neighbour of ours, who had been dead for some years. At the time both were well stricken in age, and remarkable both for their piety and walk in life. Their family, the greater part of whom were alive, had all reached manhood, and were engaged in active duties in different parts of the country. The old couple themselves were living on the fruits of their early industry and economy, in a small solitary cottage, calmly closing the evening of a well-spent life. The first attack of the malady was sudden and severe. its approach being unperceived by any one, even by the sufferer. Both had spent the day at church, and returned, conversing with their neighbours, until they reached their own cottage, where they sat reading their Bible, or conversing on subjects derived from it, until the herd-boy brought home the cow from the common pasture. On looking up, the woman saw the cow standing and lowing at the byre door. She rose from her seat, and went to admit and attend to the welcome guest. She did not return to the house after an unusually protracted stay; and her husband, beginning to be uneasy, and fearful lest the cow might have kicked or hurt her, went to ascertain the cause of her tarrying. Struck with horror, he found her talking in a fearful strain to an imaginary second person, the cow still uncared for, and the milking-pail upside down, she standing upon the bottom, busy adjusting a halter to one of the beams, and imploring the ideal person not to go until she could get all ready to accompany him to that happy land of which he spoke, and to which he showed her the way. Her distressed husband, rushing forward, clasped her in his arms as she was putting the noose over her head. She screamed and resisted with all

her energies, calling upon the phantom to rescue her from her cruel husband. For several weeks she remained in this state, confined and strictly watched. The surgeon succeeded in subduing the disease; and when reason returned, she had no consciousness of anything that had happened during the interval; but, with a grateful heart, returned thanks to God for preservation and recovery.

My pride was wounded to observe that the surgeon thought I was insane, for he quoted the above case as a parallel to mine. This I remonstrated against; and, although I could perceive a credulous smile upon his features, I at once cheerfully agreed to put myself under his care. When he retired for the evening, I found that I was indebted for my escape from death to a strange circumstance—the death of my uncle, my father's brother, who had returned from the West Indies some years before with considerable wealth and a broken constitution. We had never seen him since his return. Prosperity had brought to him no pleasure, riches no enjoyment. From being one of the most joyous and liberal of lads before he left home, he had returned to his country sullen and avaricious; with all his wealth, a poorer man, in mind, than when he left it—suffering from a continued dread of poverty, and the victim of hypochondria.

"Poor John!" my father would say, "how I pity you! Your money is not your own; you are only the gatherer for some other person. You dare not enjoy a shilling; neither can you take it with you when you die." My father had just received an intimation from a lawyer, requesting his immediate attendance in Edinburgh, where his brother had died suddenly the evening before, to make arrangements for his funeral, and look after his effects, as he believed he had died intestate. My mother had hastened up stairs with the intelligence, and to request me to come down, when she found me seated upon the chair, with my head sunk upon

my breast, as if I had been in a profound sleep. Overcome by the vapour, she sank upon the floor; the noise of her fall brought up my father, whose first task was to rush to me, give me a gentle shake, and then look in agony at me and at his wife. When he took his hand from me, I fell to the floor by the side of my mother, and the window opened as I had contrived. Uttering a cry of anguish, he seized the wife of his bosom in his arms, hurried out of the fatal room, sent the servant girl for the surgeon, and returned for me, who was lying as if dead, my eyes open and fixed, dull and void of expression. My mother soon recovered; a few neighbours came to her aid; and the surgeon was, fortunately, soon found. Their utmost efforts were for long, to all appearance, of little avail. The surgeon had almost despaired of success; at length his patience and skill were rewarded by my returning animation. The rest is already known.

So violent was the shock my constitution had sustained, from the action of the noxious gas, that it was several weeks before I was enabled to leave my room. The skill of my surgeon was evidently operating a beneficial change upon my mind. The languor and heaviness, mixed with restless anxiety, which had so long oppressed me, began to yield to the powers of his prescriptions; my hallucinations became less annoying and more distant in their attacks, until they entirely ceased, and I was restored to the full enjoyment of existence. Change of scene was his final medicine; and this I most cheerfully agreed to take, for my circumstances were now affluent, and enabled me to live or wander where I might choose. My restless mind would at times dwell with peculiar pleasure upon some one favoured project or other; and, fearful lest I should fall again into some new philosophical dream, I resolved to travel. With a stout horse and a heavy purse, I bade adieu to my parents for a short time, and rode out of my native

valley, accompanied by Malcolm Dow, a stout lad who had been reared in the family, as my servant.

I would have gone to the Continent, and visited the banks of the Rhine, Switzerland, and Italy; but I bethought me of the delightful and romantic scenery of our own dear land, with its infinitely varied beauties; the endless pleasure I would have in viewing them, in all their bearings, from the dark frowning passes in the Highlands, where rock rises piled upon rock, and the impetuous cataract makes the stoutest eye reel in looking on it, to the wimpling stream that glides through some bosky dell, where wild flowers spangle the banks, driving some village mill, whose distant clack, mingling with the murmur of the stream and the song of birds from the woods, forms a concert so sweet to the lover of nature. Without an object further than amusement, Malcolm and I jogged on for the Falls of the Clyde. Early in the afternoon, we arrived in Lanark, where I resolved to stop for a few days; and leaving Malcolm at the inn, looking after the horses, I walked out by the West Port, to visit the Falls of Stonebyres. I descended the steep brae to the old bridge, where I sat for some time, enjoying the sweep of the river, which was considerably swollen at the time, and the falls were in great magnificence. I could hear the roar of the waters as they dashed over from fall to fall, and perceive the grey mist that rose from the abyss. As I sat absorbed in the scene, a venerable personage, evidently of the class of farmers in the neighbourhood, came to me, and, after the salutation of strangers, he seated himself upon the parapet by my side, and joined in conversation and anecdote of the scenes around. He agreed with me that Clyde was a lovely stream; but added, it was a bloody one. I felt shocked at such an epithet being applied to the object of my present admiration, and requested his reason for it.

"O sir," he said, "my reason is too good for giving it

that name; it has been the grave of thousands, and will yet swallow more in its greedy bosom. My only son, the hope of my declining years, perished in its waves; and even here where we sit, before this bridge was built, a scene of heroic fortitude and resignation was exhibited to sorrowing numbers, who could render no aid—a scene indeed not surpassed in ancient or modern history.

Struck by his manner, I requested him to give me the account as he had heard it.

"You shall hear it," said he, "as I had it when a boy, from my grandfather, who was one of the sorrowing witnesses of the event. There lived, in a cottage on the banks, some distance up the stream from where we are at present, a pious and industrious man, who had a very small farm attached to the ferry, which he rented; the boat that plied across the river for the accommodation of passengers was his principal support. He was very poor, and had a numerous family—very young—to provide for by his exertions. The river was much swollen by heavy rains which had fallen for some days. It was the day of the fair at Lanark, and he rejoiced in the gains he should acquire. He was resolute and athletic, and, from long practice, knew the ferry well. The labours of the day had passed off with cheerfulness; the river had continued to rise rapidly, the evening was coming on, and the last boat-load, among whom was my grandfather, were embarked. He pushed out into the stream, and, skilfully as he manœuvred his boat, the river carried them down considerably below the usual landing place. The steady boatman, of all that were in danger, was alone collected, and free from alarm. His wife, who stood on the side with an infant in her arms, mingled cries and prayers with the roaring of the swollen river. At length he neared the side at an eddy, and the passengers waded to the green banks. His wife and all called to him to step out also, and haul the boat out of the

stream; but they implored him in vain, for he relied too much upon his own skill and strength, and heeded them not. Two or three passengers stood on the opposite bank, wishing to cross also; and the temptation of a few more pence induced him to push again into the angry stream, after a kind assurance to his wife, and those with her, that there was no danger. Scarce had he spoke, when it was evident that he and the boat were as much the sport of the swollen Clyde, as a withered leaf. The skiff shot along like an arrow towards the fall. A wild scream arose from both sides of the river; all aid was out of human power, yet no cry for help escaped him; he sat down with calm resignation, pulled his bonnet over his eyes, and, muffling his face in his plaid, cried—'Jesus have mercy!' and, ere the sounds died away, he was swept over the tremendous fall, and perished."

The scene seemed to pass before me, as I listened to him, and gazed upon the stream. We parted, and I proceeded to view the fearfully majestic spot, where the river on my right, increasing its angry roarings, gushed over the awful rock. Descending the footpath on my right, the whole scene of terror and grandeur burst upon me. The evening was approaching apace, and slowly and reluctantly I began to ascend, after having scrambled to almost every accessible spot on the side where I was. So much did the noise and sublimity affect me, that I felt one of my unsettled fits stealing over my mind. Strange thoughts began to arise. I quickened my pace until I reached the top of the height; and the glorious view—the beautiful sloping braes of Nemplar, and the village gilded by the beams of the setting sun—burst upon me. I again longed for a view of the magnificent fan-looking cascade from a new point; and so imperative was my desire that I never thought of the danger. Stepping to the brink of the chasm, where the fearful tumult raged many feet below, I could

only catch an angular glance; and, to extend it, I caught a bush, and leaned forward upon one hand and my knees. Dreadful moment! horrid recollection!—I felt the bank giving way. A convulsive effort to regain my equilibrium, and a stifled cry for mercy, are all I recollect—my heart collapsed, and all consciousness ceased.

How long I continued in this state I have no means of ascertaining; my first sensation was a sickness that almost made me again relapse into insensibility, accompanied by a feeling of pain in all my limbs. Languidly I opened my eyes; all was dark as midnight. The roar of the waters stupified every sense. The horrors of my situation chilled my soul, and annihilated all my courage. How I retained, by the energies of despair, unaided by reason, my half pendulous position, I cannot explain. I was, for a time after consciousness returned, incapable of reflection; my mind, a chaos of fear and horror. I felt wet to the skin, from the thin spray, which fell upon and enveloped me like a cloud; a profuse sweat stood upon my forehead, and rolling down in large drops, made my eyes smart. I grasped something that sustained me, yet I scarcely knew how. Gradually the sickness left me, and cool thoughts of my perilous situation began to occupy my mind; my energies and native desire of preservation began to strengthen. My first care was to ascertain if any of my bones were broken. My legs hung over a ledge of the rock, upon which the rest of my body lay supported by my hands, which still clung to the small object I had grasped; cautiously I moved my legs, the one after the other: no bone was broken; but I found them painful in many places. Still clinging to my hold, on which I felt my whole chance of escape from being plunged into the gulf below depended, I, for some time, and by many useless efforts, attempted to get my knees upon the ledge of rock; my position was becoming every minute more pain-

ful, and I less able to retain it; my arms were benumbed, and my hands powerless, from being so long above my head. I dared not pull myself up, for the falling of stones and earth, when I first made the attempt, gave fearful note of the feeble tenure by which I was sustained. My left hand began to cramp; the fear of instant annihilation seized me; I could hold by it no longer. I grasped still more firmly by my right, and, stretching my left, found relief, by moving it gently about, to restore the circulation. I dared not bring it down, lest the other had failed; and, stretching farther than I had yet done, it touched something hard and erect; it was the stem of a stoutish bush, that grew out of a crevice in the rock. A ray of hope darted through my mind. I grasped it, still keeping my first hold, and got my knees on the ledge. To stand on my feet was now an easy effort. The joy of that movement, in the midst of my sufferings and despair, I shall never forget. I felt as if snatched from the roaring abyss. My nearly exhausted strength began to be renewed; I felt comparative comfort; yet I would have given all I possessed for my deliverance; my escape was not yet more certain, or my situation much less perilous. I found that I still held clutched in my right hand the bush that had given way, and been the cause of my disaster; but how far I had fallen, or at what part of the hideous chasm I had been mercifully arrested, I had no means to ascertain; for I stood, like a Russian peasant ready to receive the knout, with my face to the wall of rocks. I looked to the right side and to the left; all was the most impenetrable darkness. My arms, now that the weight of my body was taken from them, felt if possible more benumbed. I groped with my feet as far as I could, and found my standing very narrow, but inclining rather into than from the rock. I loosened one hand, and with an effort, that I thought would have dislocated my shoulder, brought it to my side. The tingling sensa-

tion I felt from the returning circulation, almost made me cry aloud. As I found that I still stood firm, I undid the grasp of my left hand, but not before I had turned my face from the rock. I now stood facing the raging flood; but its roaring was all I could distinguish. I now looked towards the Heavens, and thought I could perceive the stars dimly, through the thick cloud of spray in which I was involved. I leaned against the rocks, but my legs began to fail me, and trembled under the weight of my body. I was imperatively compelled, while strength remained, again to change my posture, and at length succeeded, and seated myself upon the ledge, my legs dangling over the edge.

Now, for the first time, I felt as if I were at ease, and began to calculate on the chances of my escape—feeling that my situation was so much improved that there was every reason to hope I should be able to sit out the fearful night, be once more snatched from death, and witness the dawn usher in the glorious orb of day, when I felt assured every effort would be made for my rescue. I gazed intensely down the roaring void, in hopes to see some indication that I was sought after. Malcolm I knew would strain every nerve, nay, peril his own life, to save mine. I thought I now could perceive first one dark red ball or light upon the edge of the stream, quickly moving, followed by others. The blood-red glare, as they approached, gradually became more bright, surrounded by a lighter halo; but they threw no ray where I sat, anxiously watching them. Their bearers were invisible from where I was. At length they came nearer the whirling pool, and cast a red shade on the water, where it shot over the last shelf. I could look no longer—my brain whirled, I closed my eyes, I felt as if I would have fallen, even after they were shut with all my force. I shouted with all my might, in hopes they might hear my voice. Vain effort!—no sound less

loud than the thunders of Heaven could be distinguished amid the turmoil of waters.

Again I ventured to open my eyes. The lights had disappeared. I felt, if possible, more forlorn than I had yet done; my heart began to sink; I laid myself along upon the hard rock, and, commending myself to God, became more calm and resigned to my fate. If ever there was a prayer in which true sorrow for sin, and humble confidence in the goodness and mercy of God, were poured from the human breast, it was from that fearful place. After my devotions, a calm feeling stole over my mind. I laid my head down, and, strange as it may appear, fell sound asleep as a cradled babe, and awoke refreshed. The horrors of the earlier part of the night came upon me like a fearful dream. The waters thundered in my ears. I opened my eyes, and looked up. The first rays of the sun, glancing upon the mists raised by the falls, formed numerous rainbows. I dared not to look down to the abyss, or forward to the rushing stream. With a feeling of utter helplessness, I turned my face again to the rock, and looked up. A cry of hope and thanksgiving escaped my lips—the top of the bank was only a few feet from where I lay! Rising to my knees, and holding by the bushes, I poured forth my morning prayers of thanksgiving and supplication for deliverance. I rose to my feet; the edge was only a little above my reach —my situation was still fearfully critical. Whether to risk all, and, by my own efforts, free myself, or wait until aid came, I turned over in my mind for a few minutes, as I examined the space above me. The noise of the waters, and agitation of my mind, were again beginning to render my situation more and more perilous, and I felt there was no time to lose. It was far more appalling in the glare of day than the cloud of night, and, with a desperate energy, I made the attempt, clinging to what I could grasp. I know not how I succeeded, until I lay stretched upon the verge of

the gulf, secure from danger. I dared not rise to my feet —I crept upon my hands and knees for several yards, then sprang up, nor looked behind. Unheeding the path I took, I ran until I sank exhausted, the roar of the waters no longer sounding in my ears. The sight of the place was now hateful to me. I resolved not to visit it again, or see the other falls—indeed, I was very ill, from the night's exposure to damp, and the sufferings of my mind.

Without hat or shoes, I entered the inn of the village. On raising the people from their beds, my appearance was so suspicious, that it was with difficulty they allowed me to enter; but a seven-shilling piece, which I tendered to the landlady, acted as a charm in raising her good opinion of me. I obtained a warm bed, and a cordial, while she prepared breakfast, and dried my clothes, which were soiled and wet. I evaded all her artful inquiries to learn how I had come into my present situation. It looked so improbable, even to myself, that I thought no one would give credit to my relation; and the rumours upon my former escape made me resolve to keep it secret from every one, even Malcolm, to whom I wrote to come over to me with the horses.

I remained in my room until his arrival, which was not until late in the forenoon. When he arrived, I thought he would have gone distracted with joy—he wept and laughed by turns—gazing at times with a vacant stare, then touching me to prove my identity. After he became more composed, I learned that it was currently reported and believed in Lanark, that I had perished in the river. Malcolm had waited for me with extreme impatience, after nightfall, until about ten o'clock, when he could be induced by the landlord of the inn to remain no longer, and even the landlord had become uneasy. After some delay, several men were engaged to accompany Malcolm in his search for me, and, having procured torches and a lantern, they proceeded

to the side of the river, beneath the fall, and, after searching every spot they could reach in the darkness of the night, for more than a mile on each side, they again, on Malcolm's importunities, and his offer of a handsome reward, renewed their search the second time. In an eddy not far below the fall, one of them discovered my hat, sunk near the margin, and filled with water and mud. That I had been drowned none of the party had the smallest doubt. The search had continued for upwards of three hours, their torches were burned out, and the men refused to remain longer; but no persuasion could induce Malcolm to leave the side of the swollen river, where he had remained during the short interval till day; the landlord promising to return early, with drags, and men, to search for my body. In this manner they had been employed, until all hope had fled, and they, accompanied by Malcolm, had returned to the inn, where he found my letter. Confused by hope and doubt, he had hurried on foot, and run to me. Moved by his affection, I gave him a sum of money, to reward the landlord and his assistants, telling him I was extremely sorry for the alarm and trouble I had put them all to; but that my hat having fallen in, and my not returning, were caused by a circumstance I did not choose to explain.

As I felt no serious inconvenience from my adventure, I rose and dressed, and left the village for Glasgow, after dinner. As we passed the Cartland Bridge, I shut my eyes, to prevent my seeing the river, and put spurs to my horse, to quit the scene where I had suffered so much in so short a time.

After wandering over the greater part of Scotland for several weeks, I became weary of enjoyment, and turned our horses' heads homewards by the coast of Ayrshire, with a view to visit the Island of Arran, and then cross the country to Stirling, by Loch Lomond. We had reached

Largs, on the coast of Ayrshire, and saw the Isle of Bute, the Cumbraes, and the lofty summits of Arran, rise out of the Firth of Clyde, in beautiful succession. At this time steamboats were unknown. I agreed with the landlord of the inn to have our horses carefully sent round by Glasgow, to wait us at Dumbarton, and set out for the beach, to enjoy the scene, and agree for a boat to carry us on our aquatic excursion; but the time passed on, and evening approached when we were at a considerable distance from the town. We had been sometimes upon the beach, at others among the rocks, as fancy led. I said to Malcolm that I would now return to our inn, and cause our landlord to make arrangements for a boat. As we hurried away from the shore towards the town, four men, in seamen's apparel, rushed from behind a rock, and pinioned our arms before we were aware. Two of them held pistols in their hands, threatening to fire if we uttered a sound, and pushed us before them to the spot whence they had issued. Here we found two other similar characters; the whole were stout, athletic men, of different ages, bronzed by the weather.

The place where we were was close by the beach, under a rock which beetled out for a few feet—the sea, at full, coming almost up to the base—but protruding sufficiently to conceal, except in front, a number of people. Still pointing the pistols to our breasts, and almost touching our vests, they bound our hands together behind our backs, and, taking our handkerchiefs from our pockets, covered our faces. We were silent and passive in their hands; yet in agony of fear. They placed us upon the hard rock, and we dared not ask one question, to ascertain the cause of our detention. From the few words that we could pick up out of their conversation, which was carried on in whispers, I could learn that the disposal of our persons engaged them. Malcolm could contain his fears no

longer, and began to plead for mercy for his master and himself. One of the fellows snapped his pistol; I could hear the click and smell the powder.

"You are in luck this bout," said a voice; "but don't make me try it again; she never flashed in the pan before. We don't threaten for naught; so bless your luck, and take warning."

A long period of fearful suspense ensued, in which my imagination conjured up a thousand objects of horror and suffering. The sea-breeze gently sighed among the rocks, and we heard the soft cadence of the gentle waves that fell near our feet, as the tide advanced. That we had become objects of alarm to a band of lawless men, whose lives were spent in violating the laws of their country, I was fully aware, but in what manner I knew not, unless that, by our sauntering about the rocks, they had suspected us to belong to the excise. In such cases I had heard that they were apt to do deeds of violence; but Malcolm's escape prevented me from speaking a word, or requesting an explanation. At length the sound of oars pulled steadily and with caution, fell upon my ears; and a confused suppressed sound of many voices soon followed; then there was the trampling of feet through the water and upon the rock, with the noise as if numerous articles were placed close to where we sat. Shivering from cold, we sat in anxious suspense. That I had been right in my conjecture, I felt now assured; and, at this moment, I thought they were delivering their cargo. Soon the movements ceased; we were grasped by powerful hands, again threatened with death if we uttered a word, and placed in a boat, which, by the motion, seemed to glide through the water for a considerable time. No word was spoken by those in the boat, except in whispers. Again I found it touch the beach. We were lifted out, and placed upon the edge of the water, the cords cut from our wrists, and, in one

moment after, the sound of the departing boat fell upon our gratified ears. We were alone, and the first use we made of our regained liberty, was to take the mufflings from our faces. All was dark around, nor could we discern any object except the faint phosphoric light that marked the margin of the waves here and there, like golden threads, as they broke at our feet.

We now breathed more freely; our situation, though far from comfortable, was free from the dread of immediate violence; for we stood alone and solitary upon an unknown beach—but whether in Ayrshire, Bute, or Argyle, we had no means to ascertain. From our painful position while in the boat, the time had hung so heavy on us that it appeared we had sailed a great distance. Not so much as to the value of a farthing had been taken from our persons, nor any violence used, more than was necessary to keep us silent and prevent our escape. I now, indeed, think, that the pistol which was snapped at Malcolm, had only powder in the pan, to intimidate. After consulting for some time on the best means of extricating ourselves from the necessity of passing the night on the exposed beach, we agreed to proceed inland, at any risk, whether of falls or a ducking, in quest of a roof to cover us. Before we left, I groped the face of my watch—to see it was impossible, the night was so dark. I found the hands to indicate half-past ten; so we had thus been four hours in the hands of our captors.

Stumbling or falling at every few steps, we now proceeded slowly on. Malcolm, who preceded me, once or twice plunged into quagmires, through which I followed, until I was almost spent. At length a faint light, at some distance, caught our eyes. Onwards we urged, until we could distinguish a cottage, from whose small window the light proceeded. After scrambling over a low, loose stone wall, we found ourselves in the cottage garden. I looked

in at the window, and could perceive a man and two women—one old, the other young—seated by the fire. There was no other light of any kind burning; and the dull ray of the fire gave to the interior a gloomy appearance, save where it fell on the three individuals who sat crouching before it. There being no door on the side we were on, we walked to the front, and knocked for admittance. This side of the cottage gave no indication of any light being within—the window being carefully closed. For some time we knocked in vain—no answer was made. At length, our knockings were answered by a female voice—

"What want ye here at this time o' nicht, disturbing a lone woman?"

"My good woman," I replied, "we are strangers, who know not where we are. Be so kind as open the door to us."

"Gae 'wa—gae 'wa; I will do nae sic thing; I hae nae uppitting for ye."

"My good woman," said I, in the most soothing manner I could, "do, for charity, open the door. We are like to perish from fatigue, and can proceed no further. You shall be paid whatever you ask for any accommodation you can afford, were it only to sit by your fire until daybreak."

After some time spent in entreaties, the door was cautiously opened by a female, who held a small lamp in her hand, and we were ushered into a small apartment—not the same we had seen, but a dark and uncomfortable place. She appeared to be greatly alarmed, and requested us not to make any noise, or to speak loud, whatever we heard, or we might bring her into danger for her humanity, and ourselves into greater hazard. We would, she added, have ourselves alone to blame for any evil that might follow. Taking the lamp with her, she retired,

saying she would bring us refreshments in a few minutes. We now regretted being admitted into this mysterious shelter; yet the looks of the woman—the younger of the two we had seen from the back of the house—were soft and sweet, rather inclining to melancholy. We had no time to communicate our suspicions before her return. She set before us a bottle containing some brandy, a jug of water, and a sufficient quantity of bread and cheese; and urged us to make haste and retire to bed. Having filled a glass of the liquor, she gave it to Malcolm. He drank it off at once, with great pleasure. My eyes were upon her. I saw a shade of anxiety on her countenance, succeeded by a look of satisfaction, when he returned the empty glass. I cannot account for it, but a suspicion came upon me that there was more in the giving of the liquor than courtesy; and I resolved not to taste it. She filled out the same quantity for me; but I declined it. Her look changed—she became embarrassed—and she requested me to take it, as it was to do me good. There was a something in the tone of her voice, and a benignity in her manner, that almost did away with my suspicions. I took the glass in my hand, and, requesting her to fill a cup of water for me, lifted the glass to my head. While she poured the water, I emptied the liquor into the bosom of my vest, placed, by the same movement, the glass to my mouth, and, returning it to her, drank off the water. She immediately retired; saying, with a smile, in which there was much of good nature—

"I am sorry for your poor accommodation. Good night!"

I now began to reflect upon my situation. Fear predominated. I had been led into it I scarce knew how. I blamed myself for entering; yet I was not aware of what was to take place in it. We were, unarmed and fatigued, on a part of the coast I knew not where. I looked to my

watch; it wanted a few minutes of twelve; we had not been one quarter of an hour under the roof. I looked at Malcolm, by the feeble light of the lamp, wondering why he neither moved nor spoke. He was in a dead sleep, leaning upon his high-backed wooden chair. I attempted to rouse him, in vain, by shaking him. That the brandy had been drugged, I was now convinced. My heart sank within me. I glanced round, for means to escape, and procure help to rescue my faithful servant; but there was neither window nor fireplace in the small room in which we were. I placed my hand upon the door, to rush into the other apartment; but the recollection of the man I had seen, the suspicion that there might be more in the house, and the girl's warning, detained me. As I stood, sweating with agony, I heard voices in conversation in the other apartment.

"Mary," said the old woman, "ye are owre soft-hearted for the trade we are engaged in. Ye will, some time or ither, rue yer failing."

"Mither," was the reply, "I may rue it, but ne'er repent it. I couldna, for the life o' me, keep twa human creatures pleading for shelter, wha kendna whar to gang in a mirk nicht like this. Did I do wrang, Jamie?"

"I fear you have, Mary," said the man. "If Captain Bately finds them here when he arrives—he is such a devil! —I know not what he may do to them; he is so jealous and fearful of informers; and, this trip, he has a rich cargo for the Glasgow merchants."

"I'm no feared, if ye dinna inform yersel," said the daughter; "for I hae given them baith a dram o' the Dutchman's bottle, that will keep them quiet aneugh, or I'm sair cheated; for it's nae weaker for me."

At this period of the conversation, I heard the tramp of horses' feet and the voices of several men approaching the house. The door was opened without knocking, and

several men entered. One of them demanded if all was right.

"Sae far as I hae heard, captain," said the old woman.

"So far good, old mother," replied he. "James, have you seen our agent from Glasgow?—how goes it there?"

"All right, captain," said James.

"I will then make a good run of it," rejoined the other. "But I was nearly making a bad one. Two of these land-sharks were watching our motions under the rocks; fortunately, they were observed, and put out of the way in time. All had been up with me this trip, had they got back to Largs before we were cleared. Come, lads, bait your horses quickly; we have a long way through the muirs ere dawn."

He was interrupted by the scraping and furious barking of a dog at the door where I stood listening. My heart leaped as if it would burst, my temples throbbed, and my ears rung; yet my presence of mind did not forsake me. Imitating Malcolm, I placed myself in my chair, and feigned myself dead asleep.

So many voices spoke at once that I could not make out a word that was said, except imprecations and entreaties. The lamp still burned upon the table before me. The door opened, and the captain entered, accompanied by several others.

"Dear captain," said Mary, "they are not informers—they are strangers, and fast asleep. Harm them not, for mercy's sake!"

"Silly wench!" replied the captain. "Peace!—I say, peace! These are the same rascals who were watching us this whole afternoon. How the devil came they here, if they have not some knowledge of our proceedings? Look to your arms, my lads! We will shew them they have caught a Tartar." I heard one pistol cocked, then another.

How I restrained myself from shewing my agitation I know not; I was nearly fainting.

"Captain," cried Mary, "you shall not harm them, or you must do to me as you do to them. You are as safe as ye were before I let them in. Do ye no see they are dead asleep?—try them, and believe me for aince, like a good fellow."

"I don't wish to do more than is necessary for my own safety," said he; "perhaps they are not what I take them for; but fellows will talk of what they see. Taking Malcolm by the shoulder, he gave him a shake, as I saw through between my eyelids, nearly closed. "Fellow," he cried, "who are you?" Malcolm neither heard nor felt him; so powerful had the opiate been. He passed the lamp before his eyes, and made a blow at his head with the but-end of his pistol. Malcolm moved not a muscle of his face. He was satisfied. After passing the lamp so close before my eyes that one of my eyebrows was nearly singed by the flame, he set it slowly upon the table, and I felt the muzzle of the pistol touch my temple. I moved not a muscle of my face. It was withdrawn, and I heard him pace the room for a moment, muttering curses at the young woman, who endeavoured to soothe his rage. No other person spoke. He paused at length, and, lifting the lamp, held it again to my face.

"I am satisfied—all is right," said he; "but, if you dare again, Mary, to do the same, you and your mother may go hang for me—that's all. Come, boys, be moving—we lose time." In a few minutes afterwards, I heard the sound of their horses' feet leaving the house. My lungs recovered their elasticity; I breathed more freely. Mary entered, and, lifting the lamp to remove it, looked upon us in tears. I would have spoken, but refrained, lest I had given farther alarm and uneasiness to one so kind and humane. She looked upon us, smiling through her tears.

"Poor men!" she said, "yer hearts were at ease when mine, for your sake and my ain, was like to break; yet, I dinna think he wad killed ye, devil as he is, if ye didna fight wi' him; but he wad carried ye awa to Holland, or France; and then what wad yer puir wives, if ye hae them, hae suffered, no kenning what had come owre ye? Oh, that I could but get free o' them, and Jamie gie up this way o' life!' (A heavy sigh followed.) "But ye are sleeping sound and sweet, when I am sleepless. O Jamie, will ye no leave thae night adventures, and be content wi' what ye can earn through the day?" She gently shut the door as she retired, and all became still as death. With a feeling of security I laid myself upon the bed, and soon fell into a profound sleep. It was late in the morning ere I awoke. Malcolm was awake; his movements had roused me. He was still confused from the effects of the opiate, and was gazing wildly around the apartment. After taking a heavy draught of the water, he became quite collected. I rose, and we entered the larger part of the cottage, where the mother and daughter were busy preparing breakfast. After the usual salutations, and an apology for the badness of our lodging, I inquired how far we were from Largs, and was informed it was about three miles from where we were. Feeling myself much indisposed, and threatened with a severe cold, I resolved to return home as direct as I could, not choosing to run the risk of any more such adventures. I despatched Malcolm to the inn, to prevent the horses being sent off to Dumbarton, and to bring them as quick as possible to where I now was. During his stay, I became more and more interested in the gentle Mary. She was not in the least embarrassed, as she thought that I was unconscious of what had passed through the night. I felt it would be a cruel return for her kindness to mention it, and alarm her fears for her lover, for such I supposed him to be. I could have gained no object by doing so. I

already knew, from what I had heard, that she was connected with a band of smugglers, whose calling she loathed.

There was a firmness of purpose, mixed with her gentleness, displayed during the time the band and their captain were in the house, which shewed I could gain no information as to them, from her; neither did I feel any anxiety to know more than I did, or ever to be in their company again. Had I had the wish to give information of the lawless band, I could only inform as to the females; the others had managed so well I could not have identified one of them.

At length my horses arrived, and I prepared to depart. As I took my leave, I put five guineas into the hand of Mary. She looked at the sum, then at me, and refused to accept any remuneration for our shelter.

"Keep it," said I, "to enable you to induce James to quit his dangerous trade." She blushed, trembled, and then became pale as death. My heart smote me for what I had said. She gave me such an anxious, imploring look, as her trembling lips murmured—

"Oh, what shall I do?"

"Fear nothing, Mary, from me; I owe you much more for your goodness of heart. If you and James will come to reside near Allan Gow, he shall do all in his power to assist you." Amidst blessings from the mother, and the silent gratitude of the daughter, I rode off, on my way to Glasgow, and on the following day was under my parents' roof.

It is now many years since then. James and Mary are settled in the neighbourhood, and prosperous. Malcolm is still with me; but whether servant or companion, I can scarce tell at times. When my strange imaginations come upon me—for I have never been, for any length of time free from them—he is almost master of my small establishment.

# THE YOUNG LAIRD.*

In one of the midland counties of Scotland lies the estate of Sir Patrick Felspar. On this estate, and on the southern declivity of a moderately-high hill, stood, about thirty years ago, two old-fashioned farmsteads, called Nettlebank and Sunnybraes, of which, as we have a long story to tell, we can only say that the former—being the largest—was tenanted by Mr. Black, and the latter by William Chrighton: that the family of the one consisted of a boy and a girl, called *Gilbert* and *Nancy;* and that the other was the father of an only son, named *George.*

The harvest had been concluded, and preparations were making for lifting the potato crop, when Mrs. Black was taken ill of a fever; and her husband, on discovering that she was seriously indisposed, after sending the servant girl to "tell Elspeth Roger that her mistress wished to speak with her," left the house, to which he did not return for several days. Elspeth, who was the wife of one of the farm servants, being thus sent for, hastened to her mistress's presence. On entering the room, and seeing the state of the sufferer, she saw at once that a sick nurse was indispensable; and, though she had herself a husband and two

* We may claim for this tale the peculiarity of its having been the first essay of its author, Alexander Bethune, the self-educated "Fifeshire labourer." This excellent and ingenious man became subsequently well known by his volume of "Tales and Sketches of the Scottish Peasantry," published by Mr. Adam Black, and designated at the time a literary phenomenon. It was truly said of him by the Spectator: "Alexander Bethune, if he had written anonymously, might have passed for a regular litterateur." Along with his brother John, "the Fifeshire forester," he published, in 1839, "Practical Economy"—a work which deserves to be reprinted and spread among the people, as containing the true secret of domestic happiness, so well exemplified in the contented and virtuous lives of its humble authors.—Ed.

children to attend to, and, consequently, could be but ill spared from her own house, she readily offered her services, and was accepted.

By her advice, medical assistance was immediately procured; and the kind-hearted matron continued to attend the sick-bed of her mistress, night and day, for three weeks, during which period Mr. Black was seldom at home. Hitherto, the doctor had entertained hopes of his patient's recovery; but, on the eighteenth day, to Elspeth's anxious inquiries, he only shook his head, and bade her "not be surprised whatever should happen." His words were deemed ominous: a messenger was despatched to bring Mr. Black home; and, on the following day, his wife died. Upon this sad occasion, Nancy seemed to be the only real mourner; for, though her father and brother hung their heads, and looked demure for a day or two, even the semblance of sorrow vanished before the exciting potations which they swallowed at the *dregy*.* Nancy, however, did feel the loss of her mother, and mourned it as deeply as her young heart could. And, as she had been oftener than once rebuked with great severity by her remaining parent, for what he called her *blubbering*, when grief overcame her she frequently sought a hidingplace for her tears in the house of Elspeth, who, with the heart and the feelings of her sex, shared the sorrows of the poor girl while she strove to alleviate them. But she was soon deprived of this refuge; for, in a few days after the funeral, Elspeth, who had probably caught the infection while attending the deathbed of her mistress, found herself in the grasp of the same terrible disease which had carried her mistress off; and Nancy, to avoid the same fate, was debarred from entering the door of her humble friend and only comforter.

On such occasions, to have one who will listen patiently

* Repast, so called, to which, in some parts of the country, the friends of the deceased are invited after the funeral.

to a recital of our sorrows, and respond to them with a sigh, a look of sympathy, a tear, or a word, in which the tone of the voice bespeaks a reciprocity of feeling, is comfort, and almost the only comfort of which the case admits; for the lengthened speech and the studied harangue, containing, as they are supposed to do, "the words of consolation," often fall upon the ear without reaching the heart. Such a comforter Nancy Black found in George Chrighton, or, as he was universally termed, *the laddie Geordie.* This boy, who was one of her schoolfellows, and nearly of her own age, attracted by her sorrowful looks and the tears which sometimes stole down her cheeks, left the boisterous sports of the other boys, and devoted his hours of play to walking with her, or sitting in some retired corner, and listening to her little "tale of wo." Hitherto, the roads by which they came and went had been different; but now he discovered a new one, by following which he could accompany her till within a short distance of Nettlebank; and, at the place where they had separated in the evening, he always waited for her appearance on the next morning. Youthful friendships are soon formed. Ere disappointment has done its work, and experience taught its salutary, though painful lesson, there is little room for suspicion on either side, and the hearts of the parties amalgamate, like meeting waters. Thus, the two became *friends*, almost before they could understand the meaning of the word.

While Nancy Black and her boyish companion were thus forming an affection for each other, as pure, and certainly as deep, as any which ever subsisted between persons of their years, Elspeth Roger was lying dangerously ill. But her sickness was not "unto death:" and, after being confined for twenty-four days, during which her life had been several times despaired of by all who saw her, she began to recover. Scarcely, however, was she able to move about, and bestow some attention on their household concerns,

when her husband began to complain; and, in a few hours, he was laid upon that bed from which she had arisen, with all the symptoms of a most malignant case of the same disease. Elspeth, who, in the midst of many struggles, and without the outward show of more than ordinary affection, was attached to her husband, now became fixed to his bedside. Forgetting the weakness consequent on her own imperfect recovery, and fearful of allowing hands less careful than her own to approach him, she attended him, night and day, with a solicitude which none save those who have all they value in the world at stake, can comprehend. Medical advice was promptly procured. But, in spite of medical skill, tender nursing, and tears shed apart, David Roger died. Of Elspeth's grief upon this occasion, it were superfluous to speak. Suffice it that, after many years had passed by, the general expression of her countenance, and the tear which occasionally stole down her cheek at the mention of his name, showed that she had not forgotten the husband of her youth.

Though this event must have been distressing to the widow, her distress was aggravated when, on the second day from that on which her husband had been interred, Mr. Black told her that, "as he had engaged another servant, and required his house, she must remove at the term." The first week of November was now past; the term was on the 22d of that month; every house in the neighbourhood was either occupied, or already let for the coming year; and this information came to the heart of Elspeth like a thunder-shock. It was what she had never dreamed of, and never thought of providing for. For herself, she might have been careless; but when she reflected on her children, the feelings of the mother awoke in her bosom, and made her, for the time, superior to despair. Day after day, she went in quest of a hovel to shelter them from the rigour of the coming winter, and night after night she returned

without having found one. It seemed as if Heaven had determined to make her a houseless wanderer; for not a single untenanted habitation could she hear of. But we must leave her to pursue her fruitless search, and attend, for a little, to what was going on elsewhere.

One evening, after George Chrighton had returned from school, without taking time to snatch his accustomed morsel of bread from the *aumry*, he inquired for his father, and hurried off in quest of him. Having discovered the object of his search in the stack-yard—"Father," cried the boy, as soon as he was within ear-shot, "hae ye heard that Mr. Black intends to make Elspeth Roger flit at the term; an' she canna get a house for hersel an' her bairns in a' the country?"

"I did hear she was gaun to flit," said the old man, composedly; "but whatfor canna she get a house?"

"I dinna ken," was the boy's eager reply; "but she's been seekin ane this aught days, an mair; an' Nan Black says, if somebody doesna help her, she maun tak her twa bairns, an' gang an' beg.—Noo, faither, could we no do something? There's our auld barn: I would mak the clay-cats,* an' we might pit up a lum; an' I would help Jock to howk a hole i' the wa', an' it wouldna tak muckle to get a *windock;* an'—an'—I've forgotten what I was gaun to say; but I'm sure we can pit up the lum; an' the woman canna lie out by."

"I daresay ye're richt, laddie," said his father, after raising his hat, and scratching the hinder part of his head for a few seconds. "The auld barn micht do. There's some bits o' sticks lyin at the end o' the byre, an' some auld nails i' the stable—as mony o' baith as would be required, I believe. Jock could bring a cartfu o' clay the nicht yet—he could mak the cats the morn; ye micht bide at hame a day frae the school, an' carry them in; an' I could pit up the lum mysel."

* The materials of which a mud-wall is constructed in many parts of Scotland.

"But it would need a hallan too, faither," rejoined George.

"Hoot ay," said his father, "it would need a hallan, an' a hantle things forby; an', after a' has been done that we can do, the place will be but little, an' unco inconvenient; but it 'll aye be a hole to shelter her an' her bairnies frae the drift, afore they can get a better. An', e'en though the scheme had been less feasible than it is, it maks my heart glad to see that—laddie as ye are—ye hae a thought for ither folk's distress."

"Na," interrupted George, "na, faither; it wasna me—it was Nan Black spoke about it first, an' I only promised to tell ye."

"Weel, weel, laddie," rejoined the other, "I'm glad to hear that Nan Black, as ye ca' her, is likely to turn out a better *woman*, if she be spared, than ever her faither was a *man*—but, as he has a' his actions to account for, of him I would say naething." With these words, the worthy farmer was about to resume his labours, when his son, flushed with the success of his plan, exclaimed—

"But will we no tell her, faither? Her mind canna be at ease afore she ken about some place."

"That's weel minded too," said the father—"she's maybe gotten a house already; but, in case she hasna, gang ye owre to your mither, an' tell her I bade ye get a piece; an', when ye've gotten it, ye can rin yont, some time afore it be dark, an' see a' about it. An' ye can tell her that, if she likes, she's welcome to our auld barn, for a year; an', if she taks it, we's no fa' oot about the rent."

Though George obeyed his father so far as to go the length of the house door, he could not find time to go in for his promised *piece;* and, without opening it, he turned, and set off at the top of his speed in the direction of Nettlebank.

Return we now to the widow's cottage. The poor wo-

man was far from having recovered, when she was called upon to attend the deathbed of her husband. The fatigue, terror, anxiety, and want of rest, from which she had suffered during that period, might have been sufficient to break down even the strongest constitution. When to these are added weeks of wandering in quest of a habitation, the reader will hardly be surprised when he is told that her animal strength was gone—her spirits sunk, and despair seemed to be closing around her. With a frame completely worn out, a head which ached, blistered feet, and, we might almost add, a "bleeding heart," she sat by her fire one evening—her head resting on her hand, and her eyes fixed upon her children, while sighs convulsed her bosom. She wished to commit her little ones to the care of their Maker; but such was the state of her mind, that she fancied she could not perform even this duty, and the thought called forth another and a deeper sigh. While she was thus employed, Nancy Black opened the door unperceived, and, standing at her side, awoke her from her dream of despondency by saying, in a half whispering, half faltering voice—"Elspeth, dinna break your heart. I think I ken where you'll get a house, noo. I was speaking about you, the day, to Geordie Chrighton, at the school, an' he says they could soon mak a house o' their auld barn; and that his faither will never hesitate"——

To this the mother was listening, and almost thinking the news too good for being true, when the speaker was interrupted by some one coming against the inner door of the apartment with such force as nearly to break it. On hearing the noise, the widow rose to give the stranger admittance; but he waited not for her services. Putting one hand to his nose—the part which had produced the noise—and the other to the latch, before another second had elapsed, George Chrighton stood in the middle of the floor, panting from the rapidity of his march; and, without

taking time to recover breath, he began to deliver his message by saying—"Elspeth, my father sent me owre to tell ye that, if ye want a house, ye may get our auld barn. Jock's to bring a cartful o' clay—he's to mak the cats the morn; I'm to bide at hame frae the school, an' carry them in; an' my faither's to put up the lum.' An'—what is't I was gaun to say?—ou ay—tak it—tak it, Elspeth; an', if he'll no gie ye it for naething, I'll keep a' the bawbees I get, to help ye to pay for't." Here he paused, fairly out of breath. The substance of his message, however, was delivered, and he now stood silent, and almost fearful of hearing that she had already got a house.

The widow, bewildered by her own feelings, the excited manner of the boy, and the intelligence which he brought, was also silent. Nor was it till Nancy Black had whispered, "It's true enough—Geordie never tells lies," that she recollected it was her part to make a reply.

Hitherto the boy had not been aware of the presence of his schoolfellow; but no sooner had he heard her voice, than his eye brightened, and he turned as if to seek the reward of his labours from her; and—girl as she was—he found it in her approving smile. But that smile was of short duration; for as soon as she had a full view of his face, it passed away, and, hurrying toward him, she exclaimed, in an anxious tone—"What ails you, Geordie? What's that on your upper lip, an' your chin?"

"What is't?" repeated the youngster, drawing the back of his hand across the place alluded to, as if to ascertain if anything was wrong in that quarter; and then, examining the hand so employed, he continued—"What is't? It's bluid; but where it comes frae I canna tell." After a short pause, during which he recollected the opposition he had met from the door—"It's my nose—it's just my nose," he added, laughing as he spoke, to free the heart of Nancy from those apprehensions, the shade of which he

saw gathering on her countenance. "I didna ken the door was steekit afore my nose played crack on the sneck —and noo it's bluidin."

Sure enough, his nose was bleeding, and had been so ever since he came in, though unobserved. The attention of the widow and Nancy was instantly directed to staunch the bleeding: the latter brought the key from the outer door, and the former placed it between his shoulders, bathing his temples at the same time with cold water. In a few minutes the blood ceased to flow, and, after his face had been washed, Nancy's smile returned.

When they were about to depart, the widow, taking one in each hand, and drawing them close together, said— "May God bless ye baith, my bonny bairns! An', in his ain way an' time, He *will* bless ye; for, when men and women had forsaken me, an' my heart was sinking in despair, ye have provided a hame for the widow and the faitherless. May His blessing rest on ye, an' may He be your friend when ither friends forsake you!"

The *clay-cats* were made, and carried in, in the manner proposed; the lum was constructed, and the old barn made as commodious as possible; and, in a few days after, Elspeth and her two children came to inhabit it. But, though it was only intended for a temporary residence, when a twelvemonth had passed, she did not leave it. She had made herself useful in many ways to the farmer, by assisting him with his farm-work; and, as both felt loath to part, she became a sort of fixture on the farm of Sunnybraes.

There is still one circumstance connected with her removal, which must be noticed. Mr. Black, in general, did little to deserve commendation; but he could not endure the idea of any one becoming more popular than himself; and, as William Chrighton was warmly praised for his conduct in this affair, he soon began to regard him with a

feeling which was more akin to deep-rooted hatred than ill-will.

We now pass over a period of six years, during which nothing of importance occurred—save that those who, at the commencement of this period, had been mere infants, were now boys and girls; those who had been boys and girls, were now men and women; and of those who had then been men and women, many were now in their graves. Nor of those who remained had a single individual escaped, without having undergone some change. In some, the gaiety of youth had been exchanged for the thoughtful expression of maturer years; upon the foreheads of others, grey hairs were seen where glossy ringlets were wont to wave; the rosy hue which had once adorned the cheek, was now broken into streaks; and on brows formerly smooth, the handwriting of care was now visible.

About this time, Sir Patrick Felspar, after being absent for a number of years, paid a short visit to his tenants. On coming to Sunnybraes, and expressing himself highly satisfied with William Chrighton's manner of farming and general management, that individual thought it a favourable opportunity for introducing Elspeth and her two children to his notice. The story seemed to affect him, and he immediately proposed taking the boy into his own service. This proposal was agreed to; and, at his departure, Sandy Roger accompanied him to London, where we must leave him.

George Chrighton, though only a schoolboy when we last noticed him, was now a stout-looking, well-built young man, rather above the middle size, and, for some time past, he had been his father's only assistant at Sunnybraes. Nor was the change which had been produced on Nancy Black less conspicuous. From being a mere girl, in the course of six years she had become a beautiful maiden, in

the last of her teens, and with a natural modesty, which, though it added greatly to her other charms, almost unfitted her for the situation she occupied in her father's household. Of this youthful pair, it was generally surmised in the neighbourhood, that the attachment which had begun in their school days, had "grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength," till it had ripened into love.

Such surmises have often been made before, upon occasions where there was not even the shadow of a foundation for them. But, in the present instance, the gossips and tattlers were not so far wrong; for the two were really lovers, though, from the implacable temper of Mr. Black, they found it necessary to conceal their affection; and, for two years more, in as far as an open confession is concerned, they did conceal it. They were not, however, wholly without their "stolen interviews," which, though "few and far between," with the additional disadvantage of being *short*, were, in this case, sufficient to keep the flame alive. They also found means of occasionally exchanging notices of each other upon *paper*—that *dernier resort* of all unfortunate lovers.

Catherine Roger, who had hitherto been thought and spoken of as the *lassie Kate*, was now beginning to expand into the young woman, and—smitten with her charms, as wise people began to suppose—Andrew Sharp, one of Mr. Black's farm-servants, had, of late, become rather a regular visitor at her mother's. At first, he came with a quantity of worsted, "to see if she would knit a pair of stockings for him;" next, he "came to see if she would darn the heels of a pair of stockings;" and, by and by, he sometimes ventured to "come owre, just to speer for her." While his business was thus, to all appearance, exclusively with the mother, he frequently found an opportunity of stealing a look at the daughter, or, more fortunate still, of exchanging

a word with her, as if by the by. It is probable, however, that the former—

> "Wi' a woman's wyles, could spy
> What made the youth sae bashfu an' sae grave;"

and, whatever her fears might be, there is no reason to doubt that she was

> "Weel pleased to see her bairn respected like the lave."

Andrew, though young, was by no means deficient in shrewdness; he was naturally of an obliging turn—a quiet conscientious lad—a great favourite with his young mistress, and he was sometimes made the bearer of those paper messengers which went between the lovers.

The leases of both farms were now within a year of being out, and both the farmers had begun to use what interest they could to have them renewed. As to the success of William Chrighton, those who pretended to see farther than their neighbours, shook their heads, and seemed uncertain; but of Mr. Black being successful, no one seemed to entertain the smallest doubt. Sir Patrick, of late, had left the management of those matters wholly to his factor, Mr. Goosequill; and, in the esteem of this individual, Mr. Black now stood deservedly high. Scarcely a month had been allowed to pass, for the last two years, without a present of poultry, eggs, butter, or cheese being sent from Nettlebank to the factor. Upon these occasions, Gilbert was commonly the bearer, and he always stayed over night, and either drank toddy with the representative of the laird, or poured flatteries into the ear of Miss Grizzy, his daughter. At these doings, far-sighted people shook their heads again, and said that Mr. Black's hens were never sold in a rainy day, except to serve some purpose, and darkly hinted at the possibility of his taking both farms.

Shortly after these matters began to be agitated, the old

knight died, and was succeeded by his son, who had always been spoken of on the estate as the *young laird.* It was further understood that the young Sir Patrick had been abroad for the last nine months; and, according to the accounts which were circulated, he was not expected home for several months to come. This circumstance afforded an excuse to Mr. Goosequill for declining to renew the lease of Sunnybraes, as he alleged that he could not do so till he had positive instructions from the young laird to that effect. At the end of four months, a letter from Sandy Roger informed his mother that Sir Patrick had returned to London shortly after his father's death; and, since his return, that he had treated him with a degree of kindness such as he had never expected to experience from a master. The game was now up; and the factor, finding that it was so, despatched the following letter to the laird:—

"Sir,—As you have been graciously pleased to continue that trust which your much-lamented father was pleased to repose in me—a trust which, from my knowledge of local affairs, I hope I shall be able to discharge with honour to myself and advantage to you—and as the leases of your farms of Nettlebank and Sunnybraes expire at Martinmas ensuing, I should hold myself wanting in that interest which I have ever felt for the prosperity of the family, if I did not acquaint you of the following particulars. William Chrighton, the present tenant of Sunnybraes, has now made application to have the lease of that farm renewed; but, as he is a man of no substance, belongs to the old school, is incapable of conducting improvements upon an extensive scale, and merely struggles on from year to year, I have declined to give him any answer till I should know what was your pleasure thereanent. I have also received an offer for the said farm from Mr. Black, bearing an advance of rent. This gentleman is in a thriving way; he has a turn

for business, and everything prospers with him; he has extensive connections, and, what is of more importance to the present purpose, he has a son of age to take the management of a farm, who is an excellent agriculturist. Mr. Black proposes to take both farms—Nettlebank at the old rent, and the other at an advance; and, if his offers are accepted, I have no hesitation in saying that he will soon improve this portion of your estate to a great extent. I would therefore recommend him to your notice. Hoping that *that* knowledge of local affairs which I have acquired from long experience, may still be of some service to you, I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

"GAVIN GOOSEQUILL."

To this communication, the factor, in due time, received the following laconic reply:—

"SIR,—I thank you for your friendly advice, and the attention to my concerns which you manifest; but, as it is my wish that the old tenants should remain, you may let Messrs. Chrighton and Henderson have their farms at the old rent, if they choose.—Yours,

"P. FELSPAR."

This entirely disconcerted the schemes of these friends. Mr. Henderson was the tenant who had been in Nettlebank before Mr. Black; and the young laird, who had not been in Scotland since he was four years of age, as yet knew nothing of his having left it. Gavin Goosequill felt rather at a loss how to proceed; but, recollecting that "in the multitude of counsellers there is safety," he determined to consult Mr. Black, and, for this purpose, paid a visit to Nettlebank. What was the result of this consultation is not exactly known; but, as Mr. Black shook hands with the factor, and was about to bid him "good night," Andrew Sharp, who stood waiting with the horse, heard the latter

say—"Well, I think we have it after all. I shall delay matters as long as I can, and then write, recommending farther delay; this will give us time to do something, and, if I am not deceived, both will be yours in the end."

The oracular words "do something," and "both will be yours," made an impression on Andrew's mind. When he reflected on the expiration of the leases, the character of his master, and the surmises which he had heard, he felt convinced that the first part of the factor's speech had a reference to the farms, while the last part of it implied some plot, which was hatching, to forward their schemes. This conviction suggested the probability that William Chrighton would not be allowed to remain in Sunnybraes; and, as his removal must be attended with the removal of Catherine Roger, to he knew not how great a distance, he felt somewhat spiritless and disconcerted. Time seemed to stand still; and, after ruminating for a season on the means of averting such a misfortune, he took a pair of stockings, and, having placed them on the hearthstone of his bothie—no one being present—he proceeded to pound that part of them called the *heels* with the head of the poker. By this means, he soon produced something very like a worn hole in each; and then, taking them under his arm, and putting a quantity of worsted into his pocket, he set off to Sunnybraes to get them darned. When there, as his "dulness" did not leave him so quickly as he had anticipated, and as he was, moreover, loath to sit silent in the presence of one whose good opinion he was so anxious to procure, while Elspeth was darning the stockings, he told Catherine the whole story—what he had heard the factor say, and the conclusions and inferences which he had drawn therefrom—taking care, however, neither to mention his "dulness," nor the manner in which he had produced the holes in the heels of his stockings.

"Weel, lassie," said Elspeth when he was gone, "frae

what we ken aboot Mr. Black, the thing's clear enough. He's lookin after Sunnybraes for his muckle gomeril o' a son; an', if Gavin Goosequill can get it for him, by hook or by crook, by lies or by true tales, he'll no want it lang. The hens, an' the jucks, an' the geese, an' the turkeys, that gaed frae Nettlebank, hae done their *errand* weel enough, I warrant them; an' noo we maun try to do oors—at least, we maun *try*—to help them that hae been helpers to baith you an' me."

"But hoo can we help them, mither?" inquired Catherine, with a look of surprise—"what can we do?"

"I'll tell ye what we can do, lassie," rejoined her mother; "the young laird will never hear a word o' truth aboot either his farmers or his farms. It's easy for Gavin Goosequill to stap his head as fu' o' lies as it can haud; an', when this is done, it's but saying that the laird wants Mr Black to get baith the farms; an' syne, Mr. Chrighton, an' you an' me too, maun flit. Noo, as your brither, Sandy, is the young laird's servant, ye maun e'en try if ye can write a letter to him, an' tell him o' a' this ongaun. Though it's no very weel written, he'll maybe mak oot to read it; an', if he's no sair changed since he left his mother an' his hame, *he'll* tell the laird the truth."

Catherine was ready to comply with her mother's proposal. A letter was accordingly written; and, after being closed with a piece of shoemakers' rosin, instead of wax, and supplied with an address by George Chrighton, it was, on the following day, put in the post-office. In about three weeks from the date of this letter, though no answer was returned to it, Mr. Goosequill received the following note from the laird, which appears to have been an answer to another communication of his.

"Dear Sir,—I have received yours of the 1st August; and I am now convinced that the affair requires delay and

serious consideration. I shall endeavour to turn your advice to some account; and, in the meantime, you need give yourself no farther trouble about the letting of the farms.—Yours, P. FELSPAR.

"P.S.—You may assure the tenants that neither of them will suffer injustice at my hands."

Things now appeared favourable; but, as Mr. Goosequill seldom trusted more to appearances than was necessary, he took an early opportunity of calling upon William Chrighton, to say that "he believed any farther application on his part for the farm would be useless, and must only tend to irritate the laird." He hinted, farther, that, if Sir Patrick should raise an action against him, he might get heavy damages for the bad repair in which the steading then was. After having expended a good deal of learning and law-Latin in illustrating this subject, Mr. Goosequill concluded, by saying, that, so far as he could judge from his last communication, and as Sir Patrick was a proud man, and could not endure to be thwarted in his plans, the best course he could adopt was, simply, to pay his rent, and quit the farm at Martinmas.

To these proposals the old farmer demurred. "I have always paid my rent on rent-day," said he; "I have made many improvements upon the farm to enable me to pay that rent; and for the steading, though I am not bound to keep it in repair, by building a new barn and cart-sheds, at my own expense, I have made it worth at least sixty pounds more than it was at the beginning of the tack. Now," continued he, "I can see no reason the laird can have for being *irritated* at me for endeavouring to keep possession of the farm on which I was born, and on which I have lived till I am growing an old man."

"You may do as you please," said Mr. Goosequill, gravely, —"only I have warned you; and, if you are determined

to persist, you may save yourself the trouble of writing; for I have Sir Patrick's authority for saying that he is coming down to Scotland to settle these matters himself."

Having thus counselled, he adjourned to Nettlebank, where he no doubt counselled more; but through this labyrinth we shall not follow him. Only Andrew Sharp, who again brought out his horse, heard him say, as he was about to depart, "Well, I think I have the old scrub for the new barn, and, in the meantime, Mr. Gilbert, who is really a smart lad, must try to do a little."

"Fear not for him," rejoined the other; "he knows what he is working for—Miss Grizzy's fair face is worth wanting an hour's sleep for ony time."

Many of our readers will still recollect the disastrous harvest of 1817: October was begun before harvest-work commenced at all; and, after it did commence, day after day the rain poured down as if the sky had been an ocean supported by a sieve. It was after an evening of storm and darkness had succeeded to one of these distressing days, that a stranger arrived at Nettlebank, and requested lodgings for the night. The servant girl, who opened the door, said, "She wouldna let him in, but she would tell her master." Her master accordingly came, and, without ceremony, told him to begone, for he harboured no wandering vagabonds about his *town*.

The stranger attempted to plead his ignorance of the country and the darkness of the night, as excuses for being allowed to remain; but Mr. Black cut him short, by telling him, in a tone which was distinctly heard at the farthest corner of the house, to march off, or he would instantly unchain the house-dog and set loose the terriers, and let them make a supper of him. Oaths and abusive language followed; but the stranger did not wait to hear more. He had proceeded as far as the corner of the garden wall, where a wicket gate communicated with the front

door, and was muttering vengeance to himself, when he was accosted by Nancy.

"I am sorry," said she, "we cannot give you lodgings for the night—my father is so passionate; but here is something to help you on your journey." The stranger seemed unwilling to take the shilling, which she was attempting to put into his hand. "It is hardly worth your acceptance," said she; "but it is all I have at present. I cannot tell how much I feel on your account—exposed as you have been to the rain. But, as this is no night for a stranger to be abroad in, only come with me a few steps, till I can procure a guide to conduct you to the next farm, where you will find shelter."

"The farmer of the next farm may perhaps treat me like the farmer of this—and what then?" inquired the stranger, whose wrath had not yet altogether subsided.

"God forbid!" was Nancy's reply; "but he will not—I know he will not." She then led the way to a low door, through the seams of which light was visible, and, tapping gently, pronounced the word "Andrew." As soon as the door was opened—"Here is a stranger," said she, addressing the young man who acted as porter; "and when I grow richer I will endeavour to reward you, if you would get your greatcoat and shew him the road; or rather go with him to Sunnybraes, and tell them he wants lodgings for the night"—then, lowering her voice almost to a whisper, and drawing closer as she spoke, she added—"and, if they seem to hesitate, draw George aside, and tell him I sent you." The lad was hastening to obey his mistress's orders, when she called after him, "Stay—I had forgot—bring a greatcoat for him also."

The stranger, who had now caught a full view of her in the light which issued from the open door, thought he had seldom seen a fairer face or a finer form, and, wet as he was, he felt a wish to cultivate her acquaintance by farther

conversation; but she gave him no time; for, almost before the last word was spoken, she disappeared.—"Tell George!" muttered he, as he listened to her retiring footsteps—"this is something, however."

At Sunnybraes, Andrew found his young mistress's provisionary clause altogether unnecessary; for, no sooner had he announced his errand, than the old farmer rose to make way for the stranger: "Get up, George," said he to his son; "an' you, Meg," turning to his wife, "lift out owre your wheel, an' let the poor lad in by to the fire. An' d'ye hear?—if ever whisky did mortal creature guid, it maun be on a night like this; sae, though I drink nane mysel, gang ye and gie him a glass."

The stranger was accordingly placed by the fire, and a glass was brought; but still it was considered that, as he must be drenched to the skin, a shift of clothes would be necessary. On this proposal being made, Mrs. Chrighton cast a significant look, first at her son, and then at her husband:—

"Hoot, woman," cried the latter, interpreting her look, "bring the duds, an', if ye hae ony fear about them, the lassie Kate can gie ye a help to wash them, some weety day. An' weety days are like to be owre rife noo, for ony guid they're doin.—Our guidewife," he continued, addressing their guest, "has aye been fear'd for infectious diseases since a beggar-wife brought the fever to the town mair than fourteen years back. But, though ye had five-and-twenty fevers—ay, fifty o' them—that's no enough to let you get your death o' cauld wi' thae weet claes on; sae ye maun e'en consent to shift yoursel."

The stranger's language was a strange mixture of the best English and the broadest Scotch; and this circumstance, after exciting a degree of surprise in the minds of all, induced the guidwife to make some indirect inquiries concerning his profession and station in society.

"I've been thinkin ye're no just a here-a-wa man, by your tongue," said she; "an', if I'm no mista'en, ye've seen better days; for, when I was bringin butt your wet claes to get them dried, though your bit jacket an' your breeks were just corduroy, I couldna help noticin that there is no a bit bonnier linen inowre our door than the sark ye had on."

To these observations it seemed as if the stranger scarce knew how to reply—he passed his hand across his brow, and was silent for some seconds. But, on recovering himself, he told them that his name was Duncan Cowpet—that he had been born in Scotland, but his parents had removed to England when he was very young—that he had lately been a traveller for a house in London, but his master being now dead, and himself out of employment, he had thought of visiting his native country; he added that, though his dress was rather plain, he was not destitute of money, and concluded by offering to pay them for the trouble they had already been at on his account, and also for his night's lodging.

"Na, na," said the old farmer, his eyes brightening as he spoke, "we never took payment for sheltering the head of a houseless stranger, nor will we noo. But ye were sayin that ye're out o' employment; as this is a backward season, an' we have a hantle to do, an' mair than a', as I'm turned frail and feckless mysel, an' unco sair fashed wi' rheumatisms, I've been thinkin if ye could consent to stay an' help us for a owk or twa, maybe ye would be nae waur, an' we could gie you as guid wages as ony ither body."

To this proposal Duncan offered no objection, only he wished to stipulate for a bed in the house, as, he said, he had never been accustomed to lie in barns; and, as a guarantee that he would neither injure their property, nor run off without giving them notice, he offered to place five

guineas in the hands of the guidman—remarking, that it was all the ready money he had about him. "And as to wages," he continued, "I *wull* ask no more than what you *wull* think I work for." The five guineas were accepted, not as a guarantee for his good behaviour, but that they might be in safe keeping. He was given to understand that he might have them at any time; and, when the family retired to rest, he was accommodated with a bed in the house.

On the following morning, which happened to be fair, he was employed in the labours of the season; and, though he manifested an uncommon degree of awkwardness, George Chrighton, who was his fellow *bandster*, did everything in his power to instruct and assist him in his new profession; so that he succeeded in performing his part of the labour till breakfast time. After this meal had been despatched, as each youngster drew closer to his favourite lass, Duncan, following the example thus set before him, began to attach himself to Catherine Roger, who, though the youngest, and perhaps the fairest, seemed to have no sweetheart present. But Catherine, though thus left alone, was far from encouraging his attentions; and, with great dexterity, she contrived, during what remained of the breakfast hour, always to keep her mother's person between her and him—thus defeating his strong inclination to imitate the conduct of some of his fellow-labourers, by placing his arm around her neck.

On rising to recommence the labours of the day, Duncan found that his hands were blistered, and that it would be extremely difficult for him to resume his work; but George again assisted him, by inquiring if any of the lasses would be so kind as come and dress the injured parts. Catherine, notwithstanding her former coyness, was the first to obey. Bounding, with a light step, to her small repository of bandages and thread, she was back in a moment; and,

spreading a small quantity of a very healing ointment, which her mother had previously prepared, upon a piece of linen cloth, she applied it to the part where the skin was beginning to peel off, with the dexterity of an experienced surgeon, and, having fastened it with a bandage drawn sufficiently tight, she was at her work again before Duncan could move his lips to thank her. He was now offered a pair of gloves, and with them, and the soothing nature of the ointment, his labour was less painful than he had anticipated, till their operations were interrupted by the rain.

Frosty mornings and rainy days, with short intervals of fair weather, succeeded each other. When in the field, Duncan had always an opportunity of seeing Catherine; but, though he really did endeavour to ingratiate himself in her favour, she still dexterously contrived to eschew all his attentions. He was not in love with her; but he felt attached to her by the same sort of feeling with which one regards a beautiful picture, or any other object which delights the senses. The symmetry of her form, the brilliancy of her complexion, and the lustre of her eyes, excited his admiration; and, in the absence of other objects, drew his attention. In this state of mind, he frequently puzzled his brains to account for the strangeness of her manners; and, one evening, shortly after his arrival, he resolved to introduce himself to her mother; if, peradventure, his so doing might throw some light upon the subject. With this intention, he had passed the little window, and was approaching the door, when he heard a chair overturned and a noise within, as if some one had fled to the farther end of the house in great confusion. This induced him to listen for a moment; and, while thus listening, he heard Elspeth exclaim—

"What i' the warld's come owre the lassie noo!—whaur hae ye run till, Kate? Na, I never saw the like o' that!

The sark ye was mendin at, lyin i' the aise-hole, an' a red cinder aboon't!—if I hadna grippit it, it might hae been a' in a lowe lang afore ye cam to look for't; an' Andrew would only gotten a pouchfu o' aise to tak hame wi' him on Saturday nicht, instead of a sark." Duncan was no eavesdropper; but his curiosity was strongly excited by what he had heard, and he could neither go in nor drag himself with sufficient speed from the door.

As Elspeth was concluding her ejaculations, the frightened damsel returned, and was heard to say, in a suppressed tone—"O mither, dinna be angry—I thought I saw Duncan Cowpet come past the window, an' I ran to be out o' his gait. I canna bide him; his een's never off me the hail day, an' mony a time I dinna ken whar to look."

"Hoot, lassie," rejoined her mother; "ye aye mak bogles o' windlestraes. Duncan is an honest lad, I'll warrant him, an' willin to work, too, though he's no very guid o't. But, for a' that, dinna think that I want ye to draw up wi' him; for I wouldna hae ye to gie ony encouragement to anither man on earth, as lang as Andrew Sharp pays mair respect to you than the lave. But only tak my advice—neither rin awa when ye see Duncan coming, nor seem to notice his attentions when he comes, and he'll soon bestow them on some ither body."

"I'll rather cut my finger for an excuse to bide at hame, though, afore I gang to the field when he's there," was Catherine's half-pettish reply.

"Confound ye if ye do ony sic thing!" cried her mother: "though Sandy pays the house-rent, noo, recollect the guidman can ill spare ony o' his shearers when the weather is fair."

Duncan stood to hear no more; if he had formerly admired Catherine for her beauty, he now respected her for the principles upon which she acted, and he wished for an opportunity to convince her that he too could act a disinter-

ested part. On the following day, his conduct was such as to free her mind from most of those disagreeable feelings which hitherto she had entertained; and, when he repeated his visit in the evening, though she again saw him pass the window, she did not run away. After he was seated, he spoke of Andrew Sharp, and gratefully adverted to his kindness in conducting him to Sunnybraes on an evening when few would have cared for venturing abroad. Catherine's fears were now gone; she felt as if she could have died to serve the man who spoke favourably of her lover; and the conversation was kept up with the greatest cordiality upon all sides. Local affairs came to be discussed; and, as Duncan seemed curious to gain information concerning the farms, and the character of the farmers in the neighbourhood, Elspeth, in her endeavours to satisfy his curiosity, told him all she knew of Mr. Black and Mr. Goosequill, with their supposed schemes for the ejectment of William Chrighton.

It was now the latter end of October, and still the harvest was far from being completed. The watch-dog had died, and the horses began to exhibit symptoms of lameness, which were the more distressing, that the securing of the crop depended entirely upon their ability to labour. Two of the cattle were brought home, by the boy who herded them, in a diseased state, and the same evening one of them died. On the following morning, one of the horses was found unable to rise; and, before noon, he was dead also. It seemed as if the fates had conspired to ruin the old farmer and his family; day after day, horses, cattle, and other live stock, sickened and died; and, in a short time, he found himself without the means of prosecuting the labours of so precarious a season, with any prospect of success. To add to his distress, a summons was now served against him for fifty pounds, "which," as that document affirmed, "he still owed, and had refused to pay to the

creditors of Mr. Rickledyke, for the building of his barn, &c." Mr. Rickledyke was the contractor who had been employed on this occasion; the whole of the money had not been paid when he became bankrupt; and, though the old farmer was perfectly certain that he had paid it, when he recollected that the bankrupt was a friend of Mr. Goosequill's, and that the money had been paid in his office, he felt convinced that the whole was a trick, intended to embarrass if not to ruin him. He recollected farther, that, as a *stamp* could not, at the time, be obtained, for giving him a discharge, he had left the place without any voucher for the payment of the debt, beyond the testimony of two witnesses who were now dead; and thus he had no alternative but to pay it again.

The appearance of the law officers, at Sunnybrae, gave rise to a report, which was industriously spread, that William Chrighton was either a bankrupt or about to become one; and every individual who had the slightest claim upon him, came hurrying in with distraints and summonses; and, to complete the catastrophe, on Saturday, about noon, Mr. Goosequill made his appearance, with the proper assistants, and placed the whole of the crop, stocking, &c., on the farm of Sunnybrae, under sequestration for the rent.

All hope of continuing in the farm was now at an end, and it only remained to make the most of the wreck which was still left. On Sabbath morning, the sky had cleared; the wind shifted about to the north, and, on the afternoon of the same day, a strong frost set in. The frost, accompanied by a sharp breeze, continued throughout the evening, and, as soon as midnight was past, the old man and his son prepared to embrace so favourable an opportunity for securing a portion of the victual which was still exposed. While they were engaged in these preparations, Duncan was left to the care of Mrs. Chrighton, who had been in-

structed to furnish him with some *warm meat*, and a great-coat. After these injunctions had been obeyed, as he sat by the fire, while she stood over him with anxiety and distress depicted in her countenance—"O Duncan," said she, "it's a terrible thing for honest folk to be sae sair harassed. If lairds would only look after their affairs themselves, instead of trusting them to factors, I'm sure it would be better for a' parties. But it's a' owre with us, and there's naething noo but to tak some cothouse, and the guidman maun e'en work in a ditch, and I maun spin for the morsel that supports our lives. George, too, is so disgusted with the usage we have received, that he speaks of going off to America. And Nancy Black—poor lassie! my heart is aye sair when I think about her—they've had a likin for ane anither since they were bairns at the school, and, if things had gane richt, they might been happy, and we might been comfortable; but that, like the rest of our prospects, is at an end." Mrs. Chrighton's disjointed observations—particularly what related to Nancy Black, were a mystery to Duncan; and, though he wished to have an explanation, as the cart was now ready and he was called, he was obliged to console himself with the expectation that time might enable him to discover their meaning.

When they reached the field, the moon was shining clear, the wind was blowing a stiff gale from the north, and the sheaves of corn, where any moisture had attached to them, were frozen as hard as iron. There was only one of the working horses now serviceable: to supply the place of another, a colt had been that morning pressed into the service; but, owing to the awkwardness of this animal, the cart was overturned and broken in such a manner as to render the assistance of the smith necessary before it could be again used. Duncan Cowpet, who, notwithstanding his unlucky name, had escaped unhurt, volunteered his services for this expedition, and went off, with the cart and one of

the horses, to the smithy. When he reached Nettlebank, on his return from the smithy, he had nearly driven his cart over Nancy Black, who, whitened by the falling snow, was leaning against the garden wall, and appeared to have been shedding tears. On discovering him, she endeavoured to assume an air of cheerfulness, and asked if he would stop for a short time, as she would have a message for him. Being answered in the affirmative, she hurried into the house, and in a few minutes returned with a piece of folded paper, which she requested him to give to his master's son. "But stay," said she, as he was putting it into his pocket —"it is not closed—I had forgot;" and then, after a short pause, she added—"but perhaps you do not read *write?*"

"Na," said Duncan, speaking in an accent much broader than the provincial dialect—"na, my faither was owre puir for giein me ony buke lear." This seemed to satisfy the damsel, and she intrusted him with the letter in its unclosed state, only enjoining him to show it to nobody, and give it into the hands of George Chrighton.

After nightfall, George said that "he must go to the smithy for some things which had been forgotten in the forenoon," and wished to see Duncan, to give him some orders about foddering the remaining horses. But Duncan was nowhere to be found; and, after performing the task himself—the evening being now well advanced—he took the road for the smithy. It seemed, however, that he had business elsewhere; for, on reaching Nettlebank, he climbed over the garden wall, and, tapping gently at a low window, he was answered by a sigh from within. The door was immediately opened without noise, and a female form stood by his side. He placed her arm in his, and they passed silently to the barn, where they both stood without speaking for some time, and both sighed deeply. At last—

"George," said Nancy Black—for it was she—"I have

done wrong in requesting you to meet me to-night; but I have been so much agitated with what I have heard of late that I could not do otherwise."

"What have you heard, my love?" inquired the other, in a tone of the deepest tenderness—"only tell me, and, whatever your feelings may be, there is at least one heart ready to share them."

"I thought I could tell you all," said Nancy, "before you were here; but now, when you are beside me, I cannot, and yet I must; for, though my father and brother are from home, they may soon be back, and I may be missed from the house. Did you ever hear," she continued, evidently placing her feelings under a strong restraint as she spoke—"did you ever hear that your dog was poisoned?"

"I was never told so," said George; "but, perhaps, I have suspected that the dog, and the horses and the cattle likewise, were poisoned; and, perhaps, I have suspected who did it. But, if that were the worst, we might get over it still; and you must not distress yourself, my love, for dogs and horses."

"But I have other causes of distress," said she, still keeping her feelings under the same control. "We had Mr. Goosequill here last night and this forenoon; and, from parts of the conversation which passed when they were more than half drunk, I learned that Gilbert and Miss Goosequill are to be married, and Sunnybraes is to be their residence, which the factor says he is certain he can now get at my father's offer. Oh, how my heart burns to think a daughter must thus reveal a parent's disgrace!"

"Nay, my dearest, do not distress yourself for this," rejoined the other. "Though my father cannot resign Sunnybraes to you and me, as he had intended, to mourn over it will not mend the matter. Let Gilbert and Grizzy enjoy the farm; but, before they can establish themselves

on it, I will be on my passage to America; and, in a few years, with the blessing of God, I may be able to return —a better man than the farmer of Sunnybraes; and then, Nancy—but, first, promise that you will love me till"—

Here he was interrupted by the sobs of her whom he addressed. It was long before she could speak; and, when she could speak, long and earnestly did she try to dissuade him from his purpose. But the youth, perceiving no prospect of their union, except by the plan which he proposed to adopt, was inflexible. Finding all her entreaties were vain—

"Then it is as my heart foreboded," said she. "To-day I heard from Andrew Sharp of your intention of going to America. I walked out to conceal my feelings; and, while leaning on the garden wall, forgetful of everything else, your servant passed, and then the wish rose in my heart to see you once more. After I had made my foolish request, I had still another wish ungratified, and that was, in case my arguments should fail, as they have done, that you would carry along with you some remembrance of her whom you once professed to love. This is woman's weakness, but perhaps you will pardon it; and perhaps you will keep the gift, though no better than a child's bauble, for the sake of the giver."

"I will—I will!" interrupted George, eagerly, whilst he took her hand.

"I am half ashamed of it," she continued; "it is only a small sampler, on which, shortly after leaving school, I sewed your father and mother's names at full length, and yours, and—and mine—I may tell you this now, when we are about to part, perhaps for ever. No one ever saw me put a stitch in it. Will you keep it for my sake?"

"While life remains," said the lover; "run, my love, and bring it, that I may place it in my bosom."

"It is here already," said she, "and that is the reason why I wished our meeting to be in this place. Fearing lest my father should come home, and prevent me getting it from the house, I brought it out and concealed it here."

With these words, she made a few steps aside; and, a she stooped down to bring her little keepsake from under the empty sacks which covered it, instead of returning with it, she started and screamed. George flew to her assistance. Something seemed stirring among the sacks, as if an animal had been attempting to rise; he laid hold of it, and dragged a heavy body after him to the door. The moon, which was now up, showed his burden to be a man; and, grasping him by the collar—"Scoundrel!" he said, "what business had you there?" then, turning him round to have a better view of his face—"Duncan!" he added—his anger in some measure yielding to surprise—"I had nearly given you a thrashing; but you have been our guest, and assisted us in our difficulties, and I must hear from your own lips that you are guilty, before I pass sentence upon you." With these words he quitted his grasp.

The blood flushed Duncan's cheek, and for some seconds he seemed uncertain whether to offer resistance or sue for peace. At last he said—holding out his hand, which the other as frankly took—"If you had *thrashed* me, it would have been no more than I deserved. But perhaps you shall have no reason afterwards to repent of having spared yourself this labour; for, though I had my own reasons for doing as I have done"—

These words were spoken in good English, with an accent and a dignity altogether different from the speaker's former mode of speaking; but, before he could proceed, he was saluted, by a rough voice from behind, with the words—"I shall *thrash you*, you skulking vagabond!" And,

at the same moment, he was grasped roughly by the collar by Mr. Black, who raised a heavy oaken cudgel to strike him on the head. Had that blow descended, the probability is that Duncan Cowpet would have slept with his fathers; but George Chrighton wrenched the stick from the hand of the infuriated man.

"Unchain the dog!" bawled Mr. Black, in a voice of thunder.

"I'll s-et loose Cae-sar," hickuped his son. But, instead of doing as he said, he lay down beside the animal, and began, in good earnest, to that operation which the "dog" must perform before he can "turn to his vomit."

Mr. Black still continued to keep a hold of Duncan with one hand, and to strike him with the other, till George, stepping behind him, threw him quietly down upon a quantity of straw; and he, too, began to discharge the contents of his over-loaded stomach. Nancy, who, up to this moment had stood in speechless terror, now stepped from the barn.

"Fly, fly," she whispered. "My father is drunk. I know it. He has never seen me; and you may escape. I will find some means of sending it. Fly, I conjure you!" And she pushed him gently from her.

On the following morning, Duncan was amissing; and, like a fool, he had run off and left his five guineas behind him. But the mystery was about to be cleared up. A little after daybreak, letters were delivered to the whole of the parties concerned, summoning them to meet the *laird* at an inn in the neighbourhood; and the surprise of all may be easily imagined when they discovered that Sir Patrick Felspar was no other than Duncan Cowpet in a different dress. The result was such as might have been expected from a laird who had learned the truth from observation and experience. We have only room to add, that shortly thereafter two marriages were celebrated—

two individuals who had been accustomed to hold their heads high were effectually humbled; and, to this day, whenever any farmer, or other individual, is supposed to be dealing unfairly with his neighbours, it is a common saying in the district—"Send Duncan Cowpet, to see what he is about."

# THE RIVAL NIGHTCAPS.

ONE little sentence gave rise to all the disputes of the old philosophers, from Parmenides down to Aristotle, and that was composed of three words, *ex nihilo nihil*—nothing can come out of nothing—upon which were raised the doctrines of the atomists, incorporealists, epicureans, theists, and atheists, and all the other races of dreamers that have disturbed the common sense, lethargy, or comfort of the world for thousands of years; so that nothing could have better proved the absolute nothingness of their favourite maxim, that nothing could come from nothing, than the effects of that very dogma itself, for nothing ever made such a stir in the moral world, since it deserved to be called something. But a more extraordinary circumstance is, that, though we every day see the most gigantic consequences result from what may be termed, paradoxically, *less than nothing*, there are certain metaphysical wiseacres who still stick to the old maxim, in spite of their own senses, even that of feeling, and declare it to be true gospel. Let them read the tale of real every-day life we are now to lay before them, and then say, if they dare, that it is impossible that anything can come out of inanity. But, to proceed:—

In the neighbourhood of the suburban village of Bridgeton, near Glasgow, there lived, a good many years ago, a worthy man, and an excellent weaver, of the name of Thomas Callender, and his wife, a bustling, active woman, but, if anything, a little of what is called the randy. We have said that Thomas's occupation was the loom. It was so; but, be it known, that he was not a mere journeyman weaver—one who is obliged to toil for the subsistence of

the day that is passing over him, and whose sole dependence is on the labour of his hands. By no means. Thomas had been all his days a careful, thrifty man, and had made his hay while the sun shone;—when wages were good, he had saved money—as much as could keep him in a small way, independent of labour, should sickness, or any other casualty, render it necessary for him to fall back on his secret resources. Being, at the time we speak of, however, suffering under no bodily affliction of any kind, but, on the contrary, being hale and hearty, and not much past the meridian of life, he continued at his loom, although, perhaps, not altogether with the perseverance and assiduity which had distinguished the earlier part of his brilliant career. The consciousness of independence, and, probably, some slight preliminary touches from approaching eild, had rather abated the energy of his exertions; yet Thomas still made a fair week's wage of it, as matters went. Now, with a portion of the honest wealth which he had acquired, Mr. Callender had built himself a good substantial tenement —the first floor of which was occupied by looms, which were let on hire; the second was his own place of residence; and the third was divided into small domiciles, and let to various tenants. To the house was attached a small garden, a kail-yard, in which he was wont, occasionally, to recreate himself with certain botanical and horticultural pursuits, the latter being specially directed to the cultivation of greens, cabbages, leeks, and other savoury and useful pot herbs. Of his house and garden altogether, Mr. Callender was, and reasonably enough, not a little proud; for it was, certainly, a snug little property; and, moreover, it was entirely the creation of his own industry.

But Thomas's mansion stood not alone in its glory. A rival stood near. This was the dwelling of Mr. John Anderson, in almost every respect the perfect counterpart

of that of Mr. Thomas Callender—a similarity which is in part accounted for by the facts, that John was also a weaver, that he too had made a little money by a life of industry and economy, and that the house was built by himself. By what we have just said, then, we have shown, we presume, that Thomas and John were near neighbours; and, having done so, it follows, of course, that their wives were near neighbours also; but we beg to remark, regarding the latter, that it by no means follows that they were friends, or that they had any liking for each other. The fact, indeed, was quite otherwise. They hated each other with great cordiality—a hatred in which a feeling of jealousy of each other's manifestations of wealth, whether in matters relating to their respective houses or persons, or those of their husbands, was the principal feature. Any new article of dress which the one was seen to display, was sure to be immediately repeated, or, if possible, surpassed by the other; and the same spirit of retaliation was carried throughout every department of their domestic economy.

Between the husbands, too, there was no great goodwill; for, besides being influenced, to a certain extent, in their feelings towards each other by their wives, they had had a serious difference on their own account. John Anderson, on evil purpose intent, had once stoned some ducks of Thomas Callender's out of a dub, situated in the rear of, and midway between the two houses; claiming said dub for the especial use of *his* ducks alone; and, on that occasion, had maimed and otherwise severely injured a very fine drake, the property of his neighbour, Thomas Callender. Now, Thomas very naturally resented this unneighbourly proceeding on the part of John; and, further, insisted that his ducks had as good a right to the dub as Anderson's. Anderson denied the justice of this claim; Callender maintained it; and the consequence was

a series of law proceedings, which mulcted each of them of somewhere about fifty pounds sterling money, and finally ended in the decision, that they should divide the dub between them in equal portions, which was accordingly done.

The good-will, then, towards each other, between the husbands, was thus not much greater than between their wives; but, in their case, of course, it was not marked by any of those outbreaks and overt acts which distinguished the enmity of their better halves. The dislike of the former was passive, that of the latter active—most indefatigably active; for Mrs. Anderson was every bit as spirited a woman as her neighbour, Mrs. Callender, and was a dead match for her in any way she might try.

Thus stood matters between these two rival houses of York and Lancaster, when Mrs. Callender, on looking from one of her windows one day, observed that the head of her rival's husband, who was at the moment recreating himself in his garden, was comfortably set off with a splendid new striped Kilmarnock nightcap. Now, when Mrs. Callender saw this, and recollected the very shabby, faded article of the same denomination—"mair like a dishcloot," as she muttered to herself, "than onything else"—which her Thomas wore, she determined on instantly providing him with a new one; resolved, as she also remarked to herself, not to let the Anderson's beat her, even in the matter of a nightcap. But Mrs. Callender not only resolved on rivalling her neighbour, in the matter of having a new nightcap for her husband, but in surpassing her in the quality of the said nightcap. She determined that her "man's" should be a red one; "a far mair genteeler thing," as she said to herself, "than John Anderson's vulgar striped Kilmarnock." Having settled this matter to her own satisfaction, and having dexterously prepared her husband for the vision of a new nightcap—which she

did by urging sundry reasons, totally different from those under whose influence she really acted, as she knew that he would never give into such an absurdity as a rivalship with his neighbour in the matter of a nightcap—this matter settled then, we say, the following day saw Mrs. Callender sailing into Glasgow, to purchase a red nightcap for her husband—a mission which, we need not say, she very easily accomplished. Her choice was one of the brightest hue she could find—a flaming article, that absolutely dazzled Thomas with the intensity of its glare, when it was triumphantly unrolled before him.

"Jenny," said the latter, in perfect simplicity of heart, and utter ignorance of the true cause of his wife's care of his comfort in the present instance—"Jenny, but that *is* a bonny thing," he said, looking admiringly at the gaudy commodity, into which he had now thrust his hand and part of his arm, in order to give it all possible extension, and thus holding it up before him as he spoke.

"Really it *is* a bonny thing," he repeated, "and, I warrant, a comfortable."

"Isna't?" replied his wife, triumphantly. And she would have added, "How far prettier and mair genteeler a thing than John Anderson's!" But, as this would have betrayed secrets, she refrained, and merely added, "Now, my man, Tammas, ye'll just wear't when ye gang about the doors and the yard. It'll mak ye look decent and respectable—what ye wasna in that creeshy cloot ye're wearin, that made ye look mair like a tauty bogle than a Christian man."

Thomas merely smiled at these remarks, and made no reply in words.

Thus far, then, Mrs. Callender's plot had gone on swimmingly. There only wanted now her husband's appearance in the garden in his new red nightcap; where the latter could not but be seen by her rival, to complete her

triumph—and this satisfaction she was not long denied. Thomas, at her suggestion, warily and cautiously urged however, instantly took the field in his new nightcap; and the result was as complete and decisive as the heart of a woman, in Mrs. Callender's circumstances, could desire. Mrs. Anderson saw the nightcap, guessed the cause of its appearance, and resolved to be avenged. In that moment, when her sight was blasted, her pride humbled, and her spirits roused, which they were all at one and the same time by the vision of Thomas Callender's new red nightcap, she resolved on getting her husband to strike the striped cap, and mount one of precisely the same description—better if possible, but she was not sure if this could be had.

Now, on prevailing on *her* husband to submit to the acquisition of another new nightcap, Mrs. Anderson had a much more difficult task to perform than her rival; for the cap that John was already provided with, unlike Thomas's, was not a week out of the shop, and no earthly good reason, one would think, could therefore be urged, why he should so soon get another. But what will not woman's wit accomplish? Anything! As proof of this, if proof were wanted, we need only mention that Mrs. Anderson *did* succeed in this delicate and difficult negotiation, and prevailed upon John, first, to allow her to go into Glasgow to buy him a new red nightcap, and to promise to wear it when it should be bought. How she accomplished this—what sort of reasoning she employed—we know not; but certain it is that it was done. Thus fully warranted, eagerly and cleverly did Mrs. Anderson, on the instant, prepare to execute the mission to which this warrant referred. In ten minutes she was dressed, and, in one more was on her way to Glasgow to make the desiderated purchase. Experiencing, of course, as little difficulty in effecting this matter as her rival had done, Mrs.

Anderson soon found herself in possession of a red nightcap, as bright, every bit, as Mr. Callender's ; and this cap she had the happiness of drawing on the head of her unconscious husband, who, we need scarcely add, knew as little of the real cause of his being fitted out with this new piece of head-gear as his neighbour, Callender.

Thus far, then, with Mrs. Anderson too, went the plot of the nightcaps smoothly ; and all that she also now wanted to attain the end she aimed at, was her husband's appearance in *his* garden, with his new acquisition on.

This consummation she also quickly brought round. John sallied out with his red nightcap ; and, oh, joy of joys ! Mrs. Callender saw it. Ay, Mrs. Callender saw it —at once recognised in it the spirit which had dictated its display ; and deep and deadly was the revenge that she vowed.

"Becky, Becky," she exclaimed, in a tone of lofty indignation—and thus summoning to her presence, from an adjoining apartment, her daughter, a little girl of about ten years of age—"rin owre dereckly to Lucky Anderson's and tell her to give me my jeely can immediately." And Mrs. Callender stamped her foot, grew red in the face, and exhibited sundry other symptoms of towering passion. Becky instantly obeyed the order so peremptorily given ; and, while she is doing so, we may throw in a digressive word or two, by the way of more fully enlightening the reader regarding the turn which matters seemed now about to take. Be it known to him, then, that the demand for the jelly pot, which was now about to be made on Mrs. Anderson, was not a *bona fide* proceeding. It was not made in good faith ; for Mrs. Callender knew well, and had been told so fifty times, that the said jelly pot was no longer in existence as a jelly pot ; and moreover, she had been, as often as she was told this, offered full compensation, which might be about three farthings.

sterling money of this realm, for the demolished commodity. Moreover, again, it was three years since it had been borrowed. From all this, the reader will at once perceive, what was the fact, that the sending for the said jelly pot, on the present occasion, and in the way described, was a mere breaking of ground previous to the performance of some other contemplated operations. It was, in truth, entirely a tactical proceeding—a dexterously and ingeniously laid pretext for a certain intended measure which could not decently have stood on its own simple merits. In proof of this, we need only state, that it is beyond all question that nothing could have disappointed Mrs. Callender more than the return of the desiderated jelly pot. But this, she knew, she had not to fear, and the result showed that she was right. The girl shortly came back with the usual reply—that the pot was broken; but that Mrs. Anderson would cheerfully pay the value of it, if Mrs. Callender would say what that was. To the inexpressible satisfaction of the latter, however, the message, on this occasion, was accompanied by some impertinences which no woman of spirit could tamely submit to. She was told, for instance, that "she made mair noise aboot her paltry, dirty jelly mug, a thousand times, than it was a' worth," and was ironically, and, we may add, insultingly entreated, "for ony sake to mak nae mair wark aboot it, and a dizzen wad be sent her for't."

"My troth, and there's a stock o' impidence for ye!" said Mrs. Callender, on her little daughter having delivered herself of all the small provocatives with which she had been charged. "There's impidence for ye!" she said, planting her hands in her sides, and looking the very personification of injured innocence. "Was the like o't ever heard? First to borrow, and then to break my jeely mug, and noo to tell me, whan I'm seekin my ain, that I'm makin mair noise aboot it than it's a' worth! My certy,

but she *has* a brazen face. The auld wizzened, upsettin limmer that she is. Set *them* up, indeed wi' red nicht-caps." Now, this was the last member of Mrs. Callender's philippic, but it was by no means the least. In fact, it was the whole gist of the matter—the sum and substance, and, we need not add, the real and true cause of her present amiable feeling towards her worthy neighbours, John Anderson and his wife. Adjusting her *mutch* now on her head, and spreading her apron decorously before her, Mrs. Callender intimated her intention of proceeding instantly to Mrs. Anderson's to demand her jelly pot in person, and to seek, at the same time, satisfaction for the insulting message that had been sent her. Acting on this resolution, she forthwith commenced her march towards the domicile of John Anderson, nursing, the while, her wrath to keep it warm. On reaching the door, she announced her presence by a series of sharp, open-the-door-instantly knocks, which were promptly attended to, and the visitor courteously admitted.

"Mrs. Anderson," said Mrs. Callender, on entering, and assuming a calmness and composure of demeanour that was sadly belied by the suppressed agitation, or rather fury, which she could not conceal, "I'm just come to ask ye if ye'll be sae guid, *Mem*, as gie me my jeely mug."

"Yer jeely mug, Mrs. Callender!" exclaimed Mrs. Anderson, raising herself to her utmost height, and already beginning to exhibit symptoms of incipient indignation. "Yer jeely mug, Mrs. Callender!" she repeated, with a provokingly ironical emphasis. "Dear help me, woman, but ye *do* mak an awfu wark about that jeely mug o' yours. I'm sure it wasna sae muckle worth; and ye hae been often tell't that it was broken, but that we wad willingly pay ye for't."

"It's no payment I want, Mrs. Anderson," replied Mrs. Callender, with a high-spirited toss of the head. "I want

my mug, and my mug I'll hae. Do ye hear that?" And here Mrs. Callender struck her clenched fist on the open side of her left hand, in the impressive way peculiar to some ladies when under the influence of passion. "And, since ye come to that o't, let me tell ye ye're a very insultin, ill-bred woman, to tell me that it wasna muckle worth, after ye hae broken't."

"My word, lass," replied Mrs. Anderson, bridling up, with flushed countenance, and head erect, to the calumniator, "but ye're no blate to ca' me thae names i' my ain house."

"Ay, I'll ca' ye thae names, and waur too, in yer ain house, or onywhar else," replied the other belligerent, clenching her teeth fiercely together, and thrusting her face with most intense ferocity into the countenance of her antagonist. "Ay, here or onywhar else," she replied, "I'll ca' ye a mean-spirited, impident woman—an upsettin impident woman! Set your man up, indeed, wi' a red nichtkep!"

"An' what for no?" replied Mrs. Anderson with a look of triumphant inquiry. "He's as weel able to pay for't as you, and maybe, if a' was kent, a hantle better. A red nichtkep, indeed, ye impertinent hizzy!"

"'Od, an' ye hizzy me, I'll te-e-e-eer the liver out o' ye!" exclaimed the now infuriated Mrs. Callender, at the same instant seizing her antagonist by the hair of the head and *mutch* together, and, in a twinkling, tearing the latter into a thousand shreds. Active hostilities being now fairly commenced, a series of brilliant operations, both offensive and defensive, immediately ensued. The first act of aggression on the part of Mrs. Callender—namely, demolishing her opponent's head-gear—was returned by the latter by a precisely similar proceeding; that is, by tearing *her* mutch into fragments.

This preliminary operation performed, the combatants

resorted to certain various other demonstrative acts of love and friendship; but now with such accompaniments of screams and exclamations as quickly filled the apartment which was the scene of strife, with neighbours, who instantly began to attempt to effect a separation of the combatants. While they were thus employed, in came John Anderson, who had been out of the way when the tug of war began, and close upon his heels came Mr. Callender, whose ears an alarming report of the contest in which his gallant spouse was engaged, had reached. Both gentlemen were, at the moment, in their red nightcaps, and might thus be considerd as the standard bearers of the combatants.

"Whats' a' this o't?" exclaimed Mr. Anderson, pushing into the centre of the crowd by which the two women were surrounded.

"O, the hizzy!" exclaimed his wife, who had, at the instant, about a yard of her antagonist's hair rolled about her hand. "It's a' aboot your nichtkep, John, and her curst jeely mug. A' aboot your nichtkep, and the jeely mug."

Now, this allusion to the jelly pot, John perfectly understood, but that to the nightcap he did not, nor did he attend to it; but, as became a dutiful and loving husband to do in such circmstances, immediately took the part of his wife, and was in the act of thrusting her antagonist aside, which operation he was performing somewhat rudely, when he was collared from behind by his neighbour, Thomas Callender, who naturally enough enrolled himself at once on the side of his better half.

"Hauns aff, John!" exclaimed Mr. Callender—their old grudge fanning the flame of that hostility which was at this moment rapidly increasing in the bosoms of both the gentlemen, as he gave Mr. Anderson sundry energetic tugs and twists, with a view of putting him *hors de combat*. "Hauns aff, neebor!" he said. "Hauns aff, if ye please,

till we ken wha has the richt o' this bisness, and what it's a' about."

"Pu' doon their pride, Tam!—pu' doon their pride!" exclaimed Mrs. Callender, who, although intently engaged at the moment in tearing out a handful of her opponent's hair, was yet aware of the reinforcement that had come to her aid. "Pu' doon their pride, Tam. Tack a claut o' John's nichtkep. The limmer says they're better able to afford ane than we are."

While Mrs. Callender was thus expressing the particular sentiments which occupied her mind at the moment, John Anderson had turned round to resent the liberty which the former had taken of collaring him; and this resentment he expressed by collaring his assailant in turn. The consequence of this proceeding was a violent struggle, which finally ended in a close stand-up fight between the male combatants, who shewed great spirit, although, perhaps, not a great deal of science. John Anderson, in particular, struck out manfully, and, in a twinkling, tapped the claret of his antagonist, Tom Callender. Tom, in return, made some fair attempts at closing up the day-lights of John Anderson, but, truth compels us to say, without success. The fight now became general—the wives having quitted their holds of each other, and flown to the rescue of their respective husbands. They were thus all bundled together in one indiscriminate and unintelligible melée. One leading object or purpose, however, was discernible on the part of the female combatants. This was to get hold of the red nightcaps—each that of her husband's antagonist; and, after a good deal of scrambling, and clutching, and punching, they both succeeded in tearing off the obnoxious head-dress, with each a handful of the unfortunate wearer's hair along with it. While this was going on, the conflicting, but firmly united mass of combatants, who were all bundled, or rather locked together in close and

deadly strife, was rolling heavily, sometimes one way, and sometimes another, sometimes ending with a thud against a partition, that made the whole house shake, sometimes with a ponderous lodgment against a door, which, unable to resist the shock, flew open, and landed the belligerents at their full length on the floor, where they rolled over one another in a very edifying and picturesque manner.

But this could not continue very long, and neither did it. A consummation or catastrophe occurred, which suddenly, and at once, put an end to the affray. In one of those heavy lee-lurches which the closely united combatants made, they came thundering against the frail legs of a dresser, which was ingeniously contrived to support two or three tiers of shelves, which, again, were laden with stoneware, the pride of Mrs. Anderson's heart, built up with nice and dexterous contrivance, so as to shew to the greatest advantage. Need we say what was the consequence of this rude assault on the legs of the aforementioned dresser, supporting, as it did, this huge superstructure of shelves and crockery? Scarcely. But we will. Down, then, came the dresser; and down, as a necessary corollary, came also the shelves, depositing their contents with an astounding crash upon the floor, not a jug out of some eight or ten, of various shapes and sizes, not a plate out of some scores, not a bowl out of a dozen, not a cup or saucer out of an entire set, escaping total demolition. The destruction was frightful —unprecedented in the annals of domestic mishaps. On the combatants the effect of the thundering crash of the crockery, or smashables, as they have been sometimes characteristically designated, was somewhat like that which has been known to be produced in a sea-fight by the blowing up of a ship. Hostilities were instantly suspended; all looking with silent horror on the dreadful scene of ruin around them. Nor did any disposition to renew the con-

test return. On the contrary, there was an evident inclination, on the part of two of the combatants—namely, Mr. Callender and his wife—to evacuate the premises. Appalled at the extent of the mischief done, and visited with an awkward feeling of probable responsibility, they gradually edged towards the door, and, finally, sneaked out of the house without saying a word.

"If there's law or justice in the land," exclaimed Mrs. Anderson, in high excitation, as she swept together the fragments of her demolished crockery, "I'll hae't on Tam Callender and his wife. May I niver see the morn, if I haena them afore the Shirra before a week gangs owre my head! I hae a set aff, noo, against her jeely mug, I think."

"It's been a bonny business," replied her husband; "but what on earth was't a' aboot?"

"What was't a' aboot!" repeated his wife, with some asperity of manner, but now possessed of presence of mind enough to shift the ground of quarrel, which she felt would comprise her with her husband. "Didna I tell ye that already? What should it be a' aboot, but her confounded jeely mug! But I'll mak her pay for this day's wark, or I'm sair cheated. It'll be as bad a job this for them as the duck-dub, I'm thinkin."

"We hadna muckle to brag o' there oursels, guidwife," interposed her husband, calmly.

"See, there," said Mrs. Anderson, either not heeding, or not hearing John's remark. "See, there," she said, holding up a fragment of one of the broken vessels, "there's the end o' my bonny cheeny jug, that I was sae vogie o', and that hadna its neebor in braid Scotland." And a tear glistened in the eye of the susceptible mourner, as she contemplated the melancholy remains, and recalled to memory the departed splendours of the ill-fated tankard. Quietly dashing, however, the tear of sorrow aside, both her person and spirit assumed the lofty attitude of deter-

mined vengeance; and, "*she'll* rue this," she now went on, "if there be ony law or justice in the kingdom. It'll be a dear jug to *her*, or my name's no what it is."

Equally indignant with his wife at the assault and battery committed by the Callenders, but less talkative, John sat quietly ruminating on the events of the evening, and, anon, still continuing to raise his hand, at intervals, to his mangled countenance. With the same taciturnity, he subsequently assisted Mrs. Anderson to throw the collected fragments of the broken dishes into a hamper, and to carry and deposit said hamper in an adjoining closet, where, it was determined, they should be carefully kept as evidence of the extent of the damage which had been sustained.

In the meantime, neither Mrs. Thomas Callender nor Mr. Thomas Callender felt by any means at ease respecting the crockery catastrophe. Although feeling that it was a mere casualty of war, and an unforeseen and unpremeditated result of a fair and equal contest, they yet could not help entertaining some vague apprehension for the consequences. They felt, in short, that it might be made a question whether they were not liable for the damage done, seeing that they had intruded themselves into their neighbour's house, where they had no right to go. It was under some such awkward fear as this that Mr. Callender, who had also obtained an evasive account of the cause of quarrel, said, with an unusually long and grave face, to his wife, on their gaining their own house, and holding, at the same time, a handkerchief to his still bleeding and now greatly swollen proboscis—

"Yon was a deevil o' a stramash, Mirran. I never heard the like o't. It was awfu'. I think I hear the noise o' the crashing plates and bowls in my lugs yet."

"Deil may care! Let them tak it!" replied Mrs. Callender, endeavouring to assume a disregard of consequences, which she was evidently very far from feeling. "She was

aye owre vain o' her crockery; so that better couldna happen her."

"Ay," replied her husband; "but yon smashing o't was rather a serious business."

"It was just music to my lugs, then," said Mrs. Callender, boldly.

"Maybe," rejoined her husband, "but I doot we'll hae to pay the piper. They'll try't ony way, I'm jalousin."

"Let them. There'll be nae law or justice in the country if they mak that oot," responded Mrs. Callender, and exhibiting, in this sentiment, the very striking difference of opinion between the two ladies, of the law and justice of the land.

The fears, however, which Mr. Callender openly expressed, as above recorded, and which his wife felt but concealed, were not groundless. On the evening of the very next day after the battle of the nightcaps, as Thomas Callender was sitting in his elbow-chair by the fire, luxuriously enjoying its grateful warmth, and the ease and comfort of his slippers and red nightcap, which he had drawn well down over his ears, he was suddenly startled by a sharp, loud rap at the door. Mrs. Callender hastened to open it, when two papers were thrust into her hands by an equivocal-looking personage, who, without saying a word, wheeled round on his heel the instant he had placed the mysterious documents in her possession, and hastened away.

With some misgivings as to the contents of these papers, Mrs. Callender placed them before her husband.

"What's this?" said the latter, with a look of great alarm, and placing his spectacles on his nose, preparatory to a deliberate perusal of the suspicious documents. His glasses wiped and adjusted, Thomas unfolded the papers, held them up close to the candle, and found them to be a couple of summonses, one for himself and one for his wife. These summonses, we need hardly say, were at the instance

of their neighbour, John Anderson, and exhibited a charge of assault and battery, and claim for damages, to the extent of two pounds fourteen shillings sterling, for demolition of certain articles of stoneware, &c. &c. &c.

"Ay," said Thomas, laying down the fatal papers. "Faith, here it is, then! We're gaun to get it ruch an roun', noo, Mirran. I was dootin this. But we'll defen', we'll defen'," added Thomas, who was, or, we rather suspect, imagined himself to be, a bit of a lawyer, ever since the affair of the duck-dub, during which he had picked up some law terms, but without any accompanying knowledge whatever of their import or applicability. "We'll defen', we'll defen'," he said, with great confidence of manner, "and gie them a revised condescendence for't that they'll fin gayan teuch to chow. But we maun obey the ceetation, in the first place, to prevent decreet in absence, whilk wad gie the pursuer, in this case, everything his ain way."

"Defen'!" exclaimed Mrs. Callender, with high indignation; "my faith, that we wull, I warrant them, and maybe a hantle mair. We'll maybe no be content wi' defendin, but strike oot, and gar *them* staun aboot."

"Noo, there ye show yer ignorance o' the law, Mirran," said her husband, with judicial gravity; "for ye see"——

"Tuts, law or no law," replied Mrs. Callender, impatiently—"I ken what's justice and common sense; an' that's aneuch for me. An' justice I'll hae, Tam," she continued, with such an increase of excitement as brought on the usual climax in such cases, of striking one of her clenched hands on her open palm—"An' justice I will hae, Tam, on thae Andersons, if it's to be had for love or money."

"We'll try't, ony way," said her husband, folding up the summonses, and putting them carefully into his breeches pocket. "Since it has come to this, we'll gie them law for't."

In the spirit and temper of bold defiance expressed in

the preceding colloquy, Mr. Callender and his wife awaited the day and hour appointed for their appearance in the Sheriff Court at Glasgow. This day and hour in due time came, and, when it did, it found both parties, pursuers and defenders, in the awful presence of the judge. Both the ladies were decked out in their best and grandest attire, while each of their husbands rejoiced in his Sunday's suit. It was a great occasion for both parties. On first recognising each other, the ladies exchanged looks which were truly edifying to behold. Mrs. Anderson's was that of calm, dignified triumph; and which, if translated into her own vernacular, would have said, "My word, lass, but ye'll fin whar ye are noo." Mrs. Callender's, again, was that of bold defiance, and told of a spirit that was unconquerable—game to the last being the most strongly marked and leading expression, at this interesting moment, of her majestic countenance. Close beside where Mrs. Anderson sat, and evidently under her charge, there stood an object which, from the oddness of its appearing in its present situation, attracted a good deal of notice, and excited some speculation amongst those present in the court, and which particularly interested Mrs. Callender and her worthy spouse. This was a hamper—a very large one. People wondered what could be in it, and for what purpose it was there. They could solve neither of these problems; but the reader can, we dare say. He will at once conjecture—and, if he does so, he will conjecture rightly—that the hamper in question contained the remains of the smashables spoken of formerly at some length, and that it was to be produced in court by the pursuers, as evidence of the nature and extent of the damage done.

The original idea of bringing forward this article, for the purpose mentioned, was Mrs. Anderson's; and, having been approved of by her husband, it had been that morning carted to the court-house, and thereafter carried to and

deposited in its present situation by the united exertions of the pursuers, who relied greatly on the effect it would produce when its lid should be thrown open, and the melancholy spectacle of demolished crockery it concealed exhibited.

The case of Mr. and Mrs. Anderson *versus* Mr. and Mrs. Callender being pretty far down in the roll, it was nearly two hours before it was called. This event, however, at length took place. The names of the pursuers and defenders resounded through the court room, in the slow, drawling, nasal-toned voice of the crier. Mrs. Anderson, escorted by her loving spouse, sailed up the middle of the apartment, and placed herself before the judge. With no less dignity of manner, and with, at least, an equal stateliness of step, Mrs. Callender, accompanied by her lord and master, sailed up after her, and took her place a little to one side. The parties being thus arranged, proceedings commenced. Mrs. Anderson was asked to state her case; Mrs. Anderson was not slow to accept the invitation. She at once began:—

"Ye see, my lord, sir, the matter was just this—and I daur *her* there" (a look of intense defiance at Mrs. Callender) "to deny a word, my lord, sir, o' what I'm gaun to say; although I daur say she wad do't if she could."

"My good woman," here interposed the judge, who had a nervous apprehension of the forensic eloquence of such female pleaders as the one now before him, "will you have the goodness to confine yourself strictly to a simple statement of your case?"

"Weel, my lord, sir, I will. Ye see, then, the matter is just this."

And Mrs. Anderson forthwith proceeded to detail the particulars of the quarrel and subsequent encounter, with a minuteness and circumstantiality which, we fear, the reader would think rather tedious were we here to repeat.

In this statement of her case, Mrs. Anderson, having the fear of her husband's presence before her eyes, made no allusion whatever to the nightcaps, but rested the whole quarrel on the jelly pot. Now, this was a circumstance which Mrs. Callender noted, and of which she, on the instant, determined to take a desperate advantage. Regardless of all consequences, and, amongst the rest, of discovering to her husband the underhand part she had been playing in regard to the affair of the nightcap, she resolved on publicly exposing, as she imagined, the falsehood and pride of her hated rival, by stating the facts of the case as to the celebrated nightcaps. To this revenge she determined on sacrificing every other consideration. To return, however, in the meantime, to the proceedings in court.

The statements of the pursuers being now exhausted, the defenders were called upon to give their version of the story. On this summons, both Mrs. Callender and her husband pressed themselves into a central position, with the apparent intention of both entering on the defences at the same time. And this proved to be the fact. On being specially and directly invited by the judge to open the case—

"Ye see, my lord," began *Mr.* Thomas Callender; and—

"My lord, sir, ye see," began, at the same instant, *Mrs.* Thomas Callender.

"Now, now," here interposed the judge, waving his hand impatiently, "one at a time, if you please. One at a time."

"Surely," replied Mr. Callender. "Staun aside, guidwife, staun aside," he said; at the same time gently pushing his wife back with his left hand as he spoke. "*I'll* lay doon the case to his lordship."

"Ye'll do nae sic a thing, Thomas; *I'll* do't," exclaimed Mrs. Callender, not only resisting her husband's attempt to thrust her into the rear, but forcibly placing *him* in that

relative position; while she herself advanced a pace or two nearer to the bench. On gaining this vantage ground, Mrs. Callender at once began, and with great emphasis and circumstantiality detailed the whole story of the night-caps; carefully modelling it so, however, as to show that her own part in the transaction was a *bona fide* proceeding; on the part of her rival, the reverse; and that the whole quarrel, with its consequent demolition of crockery, was entirely the result of Mrs. Anderson's "upsettin' pride, and vanity, and jealousy." During the delivery of these details, the court was convulsed with laughter, in which the sheriff himself had much difficulty to refrain from joining.

On the husbands of the two women, however, they had a very different effect. Amazed, confounded, and grievously affronted at this unexpected disclosure of the ridiculous part they had been made to perform by their respective wives, they both sneaked out of court, amidst renewed peals of laughter, leaving the latter to finish the case the best way they could. How this was effected we know not, as at this point ends our story of the rival nightcaps.

END OF VOL. III.

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# WILSON'S

# TALES OF THE BORDERS,

## AND OF SCOTLAND.

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### THE SOLITARY OF THE CAVE.

On the banks of the Tweed, and about half a mile above where the Whitadder flows into it on the opposite side, there is a small and singular cave. It is evidently not an excavation formed by nature, but the work of man's hands. To the best of my recollection, it is about ten feet square, and in the midst of it is a pillar or column, hewn out of the old mass, and reaching from the floor to the roof. It is an apartment cut out of the solid rock, and must have been a work of great labour. In the neighbourhood, it is generally known by the name of the King's Cove, and the tradition runs, that it was once the hiding-place of a Scottish king. Formerly, it was ascended from the level of the water by a flight of steps, also hewn out of the rock; but the mouldering touch of time, the storms of winter, and the undermining action of the river, which continually appears to press southward, (as though nature aided in enlarging the Scottish boundary,) has long since swept them away, though part of them were entire within the memory of living men. What king used it as a hiding-place, tradition sayeth not: but it also whispers that it was used for a like purpose by the "great patriot hero," Sir William Wallace. These things may have been; but certainly it never was

formed to be a mere place of concealment for a king, though such is the popular belief. Immediately above the bank where it is situated, are the remains of a Roman camp; and it is more than probable that the cave is coeval with the camp, and may have been used for religious purposes —or, perchance, as a prison.

But our story has reference to more modern times. Almost ninety years have fallen as drops into the vast ocean of eternity, since a strange and solitary man took up his residence in the cave. He appeared a melancholy being —he was seldom seen, and there were few with whom he would hold converse. How he lived no one could tell, nor would he allow any one to approach his singular habitation. It was generally supposed that he had been "out," as the phrase went, with Prince Charles, who, after being hunted as a wild beast upon the mountains, escaped to France only a few months before the appearance of the Solitary on Tweedside. This, however, was merely a conjecture. The history and character of the stranger were a mystery; and the more ignorant of the people believed him to be a wizard or wicked man, who, while he avoided all manner of intercourse with his fellow-mortals, had power over and was familiar with the spirits of the air; for, at that period, the idle belief in witchcraft was still general. His garments were as singular as his habits, and a large coarse cloak or coat, of a brown colour, fastened around him with a leathern girdle, covered his person; while on his head he wore a long, conical cap, composed of fox-skins, somewhat resembling those worn now-a-days by some of our regiments of dragoons. His beard, which was black, was also permitted to grow. But there was a dignity in his step, as he was occasionally observed walking upon the banks over his hermitage, and an expression of pride upon his countenance and in the glance of his eyes, which spoke him to have been a person of some note.

For three years he continued the inhabitant of the cave; and, throughout that period, he permitted no one to enter it. But, on its appearing to be deserted for several days, some fishermen, apprehending that the recluse might be dying, or perchance dead, within it, ascended the flight of steps, and, removing a rude door which merely rested against the rock and blocked up the aperture, they perceived that the cave was tenantless. On the farther side of the pillar, two boards, slightly raised as an inclined plane, and covered with dried rushes, marked what had been the bed of the Solitary. A low stool, a small and rude table, with two or three simple cooking utensils, completed the furniture of the apartment. The fishermen were about to withdraw, when one of them picked up a small parcel of manuscripts near the door of the cave, as though the hermit had dropped them by accident at his departure. They appeared to be intended as letters to a friend, and were entitled—

"MY HISTORY."

"Dear Lewis, (they began,) when death shall have sealed up the eyes, and perchance some stranger dug a grave for your early friend, Edward Fleming, then the words which he now writes for your perusal may meet your eye. You believe me dead—and would to Heaven that I had died, ere my hands became red with guilt, and my conscience a living fire which preys upon and tortures me, but will not consume me! You remember—for you were with me—the first time I met Catherine Forrester. It was when her father invited us to his house in Nithsdale, and our hearts, like the season, were young. She came upon my eyes as a dream of beauty, a being more of heaven than of earth. You, Lewis, must admit that she was all that fancy can paint of loveliness. Her face, her form, her auburn ringlets, falling over a neck of alabaster!—where might man

find their equal? She became the sole object of my waking thoughts, the vision that haunted my sleep. And was she not good as beautiful? Oh! the glance of her eyes was mild as a summer morning breaking on the earth, when the first rays of the sun shoot like streaks of gold across the sea. Her smile, too—you cannot have forgotton its sweetness! never did I behold it, but I thought an angel was in my presence, shedding influence over me. There was a soul, too, in every word she uttered. Affectation she had none; but the outpourings of her mind flowed forth as a river, and her wit played like the ripple which the gentle breeze makes to sport upon its bosom. You may think that I am about to write you a maudlin tale of love, such as would draw tears from a maiden in her teens, while those of more sober age turned away from it, and cried—'Pshaw!' But fear not—there is more of misery and madness than of love in my history. And yet, why should we turn with affected disgust from a tale of the heart's first, best, purest, and dearest affections? It is affectation, Lewis—the affectation of a cynic, who cries out, 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' when the delicacy of young affection has perished in his own breast. Who is there bearing the human form that looks not back upon those days of tenderness and bliss, with a feeling akin to that which our first parents might have experienced, when they looked back upon the Eden from which they had been expelled? Whatever may be your feelings, forgive me, while, for a few moments, I indulge in the remembrance of this one bright spot in my history, even although you are already in part acquainted with it.

We had been inmates beneath the roof of Sir William Forrester for somewhat more than two months, waiting to receive intelligence regarding the designs of his Excellency, or the landing of the Prince. It was during the Easter holidays, and you had gone to Edinburgh for a few days,

to ascertain the feelings and the preparations of the friends of the cause there. I remained almost forgetful of our errand, dreaming beneath the eyes of Catherine. It was on the second day after your departure, Sir William sat brooding over the possible results of the contemplated expedition, now speaking of the feeling of the people, the power of the house of Hanover, the resources of Prince Charles, and the extent of the assistance he was likely to receive from France —drowning, at the same time, every desponding thought that arose in an additional glass of claret, and calling on me to follow his example. But my thoughts were of other matters. Catherine sat beside me, arranging Easter gifts for the poor; and I, though awkwardly, attempted to assist her. Twilight was drawing on, and the day was stormy for the season, for the snow fell, and the wind whirled round the drift in fantastic columns; but with us, the fire blazed blithely, mingling its light with the fading day, and though the storm raged without, and Sir William seemed ready to sink into melancholy, I was happy—more than happy. But attend, Lewis, for I never told you this; at the very moment when my happiness seemed tranquil as the rays of a summer moon at midnight, showering them on a mountain and casting its deep, silent shadow on a lake, as though it revealed beneath the waters a bronzed and a silent world, the trampling of a horse's feet was heard at the gate. I looked towards the narrow window. A blackish-brown, shaggy animal attempted to trot towards the door. It had rough hanging ears, a round form, and hollow back; and a tall lathy-looking figure, dismounting from it, gave the bridle to Sir William's groom, and uttered his orders respecting it, notwithstanding of the storm, with the slowness and solemnity of a judge. And, fearful that, although so delivered, they might not be obeyed to the letter—

'A merciful man regardeth the life of his beast,' said he, and stalked to the stable behind them.

'There go a brace of originals,' thought I; and, with difficulty, I suppressed a laugh.

But Catherine smiled not, and her father left the room to welcome the vistant.

The tall, thin man now entered. I call him tall, for his stature exceeded six feet; and I say thin, for nature had been abundantly liberal with bones and muscle, but wofully niggard in clothing them with flesh. His limbs, however, were lengthy enough for a giant of seven feet; and it would be difficult for me to say, whether his swinging arms, which seemed suspended from his shoulders, appeared more of use or of incumbrance. His countenance was a thoughtful blank, if you will allow me such an expression. He had large, grey, fixture-like, unmeaning eyes; and his hair was carefully combed back and plaited behind, to show his brow to the best advantage. He gave two familiar stalks across the floor, and he either did not see me, or he cared not for seeing me.

'A good Easter to ye, Catherine, my love!' said he. 'Still employed wi' works o' love an' charity? How have ye been, dear?' And he lifted her fair hand to his long blue lips.

Catherine was silent—she became pale, deadly pale. I believe her hand grew cold at his touch, and that she would have looked to me; but she could not—she dared not. *Something forbade it.* But with me the spell was broken —the chain that bound me to her father's house, that withheld me from accompanying you to Edinburgh, was revealed. The uncouth stranger tore the veil from my eyes—he showed me the first glance of love in the mirror of jealousy. My teeth grated together—my eyes flashed —drops of sweat stood upon my forehead. My first impulse was to dash the intruder to the ground; but, to hide my feelings, I rose from my seat, and was about to leave the room.

'Sir, I ask your pardon,' said he—'I did not observe that ye was a stranger; but that accounts for the uncommon dryness o' my Katie. Yet, sir, ye mustna think that, though she is as modest as a bit daisy peeping out frae beneath a clod to get a blink o' the sun, but that we can hae our ain crack by our twa sels for a' that.'

'Sir Peter Blakely,' said Catherine, rising with a look expressive of indignation and confusion, 'what mean ye?'

'Oh, no offence, Miss Catherine—none in the world,' he was beginning to say, when, fortunately, her father entered, as I found that I had advanced a step towards the stranger, with I scarce know what intention; but it was not friendly.

'Sir Peter,' said Sir William, 'allow me to introduce you to my young friend, Mr. Fleming; he is *one of us*—a supporter of the good cause.'

He introduced me in like manner. I bowed—trembled—bowed again.

'I am very happy to see you, Mr. Fleming,' said Sir Peter—'very happy, indeed.' And he stretched out his huge collection of fingers to shake hands with me.

My eyes glared on his, and I felt them burn as I gazed on him. He evidently quailed, and would have stepped back; but I grasped his hand, and scarce knowing what I did, I grasped it as though a vice had held it. The blood sprang to his thin fingers, and his glazed orbs started farther from their sockets.

'Save us a'! friend! friend! Mr Fleming! or what do they ca' ye?' he exclaimed in agony; 'is that the way you shake hands in your country? I would hae ye to mind my fingers arena made o' cauld iron.

The cold and the snow had done half the work with his fingers before, and the grasp I gave them squeezed them into torture; and he stood shaking and rattling them in the air, applying them to his lips and again to the fire,

and, finally, dancing round the room, swinging his tormented hand, and exclaiming—

'Sorrow take ye! for I dinna ken whether my fingers be off or on!'

Sir William strove to assure him it was merely the effect of cold, and that I could not intend to injure him, while, with difficulty, he kept gravity at the grotesque contortions and stupendous strides of his intended son-in-law. Even Catherine's countenance relapsed into a languid smile, and I, in spite of my feelings, laughed outright, while the object of our amusement at once wept and laughed to keep us company.

You will remember that I slept in an apartment separated only by a thin partition from the breakfast parlour. In the partition which divided my chamber from the parlour was a door that led to it, one half of which was of glass, and in the form of a window, and over the glass fell a piece of drapery. It was not the door by which I passed from or entered my sleeping room, but through the drapery I could discover (if so minded) whatever took place in the adjoining apartment.

Throughout the night I had not retired to rest; my soul was filled with anxious and uneasy thoughts; and they chased sleep from me. I felt how deeply, shall I say how madly, I loved my Catherine; and, in Sir Peter Blakely, I beheld a rival who had forestalled me in soliciting her hand; and I hated him. My spirit was exhausted with its own bitter and conflicting feelings; and I sat down as a man over whom agony of soul has brought a stupor, with my eyes vacantly fixed upon the curtain which screened me from the breakfast parlour. Sir Peter entered it, and the sound of his footsteps broke my reverie. I could perceive him approach the fire, draw forward a chair, and place his feet on each side of the grate. He took out his tobacco-box, and began to enjoy the comforts of his morning pipe

in front of a 'green fire;' shivering—for the morning was cold—and edging forward his chair, until his knees almost came in conjunction with the mantelpiece. His pipe was finished, and he was preparing to fill it a second time. He struck it over his finger, to shake out the dust which remained after his last whiff; he struck it a second time, (he had been half dreaming, like myself,) and it broke in two and fell among his feet. He was left without a companion. He arose and began to walk across the room; his countenance bespoke anxiety and restlessness. I heard him mutter the words—

'I will marry her!—yea, I will!—my sweet Catherine!'

Every muttered word he uttered was a dagger driven into my bosom. At that moment, Sir William entered the parlour.

'Sir,' said Sir Peter, after their morning salutations, 'I have been thinking it is a long way for me to come over from Roxburgh to here'—and he paused, took out his snuff-box, opened the lid, and added—'Yes, sir, it is a long way'—he took a pinch of snuff, and continued—'Now, Sir William, I have been thinking that it would be as well, indeed a great deal better, for you to come over to my lodge at a time like this.' Here he paused, and placed the snuff-box in his pocket.

'I can appreciate your kind intentions,' said Sir William, 'but'——

'There can be no *buts* about it,' returned the other—'I perceive ye dinna understand me, Sir William. What I mean is this'—but here he seemed at a loss to explain his meaning; and, after standing with a look of confusion for a few moments, he took out his tobacco-box, and added—'I would thank you, sir, to order me a pipe.' The pipe was brought—he put it in the fire, and added—'I have been thinking, Sir William, very seriously have I been thinking, on a change of life. I am no great bairn in the

world now; and, I am sure, sir, none knows better than you (who for ten years was my guardian), that I never had such a degree of thoughtlessness about me as to render it possible to suppose that I would make a bad husband to any woman that was disposed to be happy.' Once more he became silent, and taking his pipe from the fire, after a few thoughtful whiffs, he resumed—'Servants will have their own way without a mistress owre them; and I am sure it would be a pity to see onything going wrong about my place, for every body will say, that has seen it, that the sun doesna wauken the birds to throw the soul of music owre a lovelier spot, in a' his journey round the globe. Now, Sir William,' he added, 'it is needless for me to say it, for every person within twenty miles round is aware that I am just as fond o' Miss Catherine as the laverock is o' the blue lift; and it is equally sure and evident to me, that she cares for naebody but mysel.'

Lewis! imagine my feelings when I heard him utter this! There was a word that I may not write, which filled my soul, and almost burst from my tongue. I felt agony and indignation burn over my face. Again, I heard him add—'When I was over in the middle o' harvest last, ye remember that, in your presence, I put the queston fairly to her; and, although she hung down her head and said nothing, yet that, sir, in my opinion, is just the way a virtuous woman ought to consent. I conceive that it shewed true affection, and sterling modesty; and, sir, what I am now thinking is this—Catherine is very little short of one-and-twenty, and I, not so young as I have been, am every day drawing nearer to my sere and yellow leaf; and I conceive it would be great foolishness—ye will think so yourself—to be putting off time.'

'My worthy friend,' said Sir William, 'you are aware that the union you speak of is one from which my consent has never been withheld; and I am conscious that, in com-

plying with your wishes, I shall bestow my daughter's hand upon one whose heart is as worthy of her affections as his actions and principles are of her esteem.'

Sir Peter gave a skip (if I may call a stride of eight feet by such a name) across the room, he threw the pipe in the grate, and, seizing the hand of Sir William, exclaimed—

> 'Oh, joy supreme! oh, bliss beyond compare!
> My cup runs owre—Heaven's bounty can nae mair!'

'Excuse the quotation from a profane author,' he added, 'upon such a solemn occasion; but he expresses exactly my feelings at this moment; for, oh, could you feel what I feel here!'—And he laid his hand upon his breast. 'Whatever be my faults, whatever my weakness, I am strong in gratitude.'

You will despise me for having played the part of a mean listener. Be it so, Lewis—I despise, I hate myself. I heard it proposed that the wedding-day should take place within a month: but the consent of Catherine was not yet obtained. I perceived her enter the apartment; I witnessed her agony when her father communicated to her the proposal of his friend, and his wish that it should be agreed to. Shall I tell it you, my friend, that the agony I perceived on her countenance kindled a glow of joy upon mine? Yes, I rejoiced in it, for it filled my soul with hope, it raised my heart as from the grave.

Two days after this, and I wandered forth among the woods, to nourish hope in solitude. Every trace of the recent storm had passed away, the young buds were wooing the sunbeams, and the viewless cuckoo lifted up its voice from afar. All that fell upon the ear, and all that met the eye, contributed to melt the soul to tenderness. My thoughts were of Catherine, and I now thought how I should unbosom before her my whole heart; or, I fancied her by my side, her fair face beaming smiles on mine, her lips whisper-

ing music. My spirit became entranced—it was filled with her image. With my arms folded upon my bosom, I was wandering thus unconsciouly along a footpath in the wood, when I was aroused by the exclamation—

'Edward!'

It was my Catherine. I started as though a disembodied spirit had met me on my path. Her agitation was not less than mine. I stepped forward—I would have clasped her to my bosom—but resolution forsook me—her presence awed me—I hesitated and faltered—

'*Miss* Forrester!'

I had never called her by any other name; but, as she afterwards told me, the word then went to her heart, and she thought, 'He cares not for me, and I am lost!' Would to Heaven that such had ever remained her thoughts, and your friend would have been less guilty and less wretched than he this day is!

I offered her my arm, and we walked onward together; but we spoke not to each other—we could not speak. Each had a thousand things to say, but they were all unutterable. A stifled sigh escaped from her bosom, and mine responded to it. We had approached within a quarter of a mile of her father's house. Still we were both silent. I trembled—I stood suddenly still.

'Catherine!' I exclaimed, and my eyes remained fixed upon the ground—my bosom laboured in agony—I struggled for words, and, at length, added, 'I cannot return to your father's—Catherine, I cannot!'

'Edward!' she cried, 'whither—whither would you go?—you would not leave me thus? What means this?'

'Means! Catherine!' returned I—' are ye not to be another's? Would that I had died before I had looked upon thy face, and my soul was lighted with a fleeting joy, only that the midnight of misery might sit down on it for ever!'

'Oh, speak not thus!' she cried, and her gentle form shook as a blighted leaf in an autumnal breeze; 'speak not language unfit for you to utter or me to hear. Come, *dear* Edward!'

'*Dear* Edward!' I exclaimed, and my arms fell upon her neck—'that word has recalled me to myself! *Dear* Edward!—repeat those words again!—let the night-breeze whisper them, and bear them on its wings for ever! Tell me, Catherine, am I indeed *dear* to you?'

She burst into tears, and hid her face upon my bosom.

'Edward!' she sobbed, 'let us leave this place—I have said too much—let us return home.'

'No, loved one!' resumed I; 'if you have said too much, we part now, and eternity may not unite us! Farewell, Catherine!—be happy! Bear my thanks to your father, and say—but, no, no!—say nothing,—let not the wretch he has honoured with his friendship blast his declining years! Farewell, love!' I pressed my lips upon her snowy brow, and again I cried—'Farewell!'

'You must not—shall not leave me!' she said, and trembled; while her fair hands grasped my arm.

'Catherine,' added I, 'can I see you another's? The thought chokes me! Would you have me behold it?—shall my eyes be withered by the sight? Never, never! Forgive me!—Catherine, forgive me! I have acted rashly, perhaps cruelly; but I would not have spoken as I have done—I would have fled from your presence—I would not have given one pang to your gentle bosom—your father should not have said that he sheltered a scorpion that turned and stung him; but, meeting you as I have done to-day, I could no longer suppress the tumultuous feelings that struggled in my bosom. But it is past. Forgive me—forget me!'

Still memory hears her sighs, as her tears fell upon my bosom, and, wringing her hands in bitterness, she cried—

'Say not, *forget* you! If, in compliance with my father's will, I must give my hand to another, and if to him my vows must be plighted, I will keep them sacred—yet my heart is yours!'

Lewis! I was delirious with joy, as I listened to this confession from her lips. The ecstasy of years was compressed into a moment of deep, speechless, almost painful luxury. We mingled our tears together, and our vows went up to heaven a sacrifice pure as the first that ascended, when the young earth offered up its incense from paradise to the new-born sun.

I remained beneath her father's roof until within three days of the time fixed for her becoming the bride of Sir Peter Blakely. Day by day, I beheld my Catherine move to and fro like a walking corpse—pale, speechless, her eyes fixed and lacking their lustre. Even I seemed unnoticed by her. She neither sighed nor wept. A trance had come over her faculties. She made no arrangements for her bridal; and when I at times whispered to her that *she should be mine!* O Lewis! she would then smile—but it was a smile where the light of the soul was not—more dismal, more vacant than the laugh of idiotcy! Think, then, how unlike they were to the rainbows of the soul which I had seen radiate the countenance of my Catherine!

Sir Peter Blakely had gone into Roxburghshire, to make preparations for taking home his bride, and her father had joined you in Edinburgh, relative to the affairs of Prince Charles, in consequence of a letter which he had received from you, and the contents of which might not even be communicated to me. At any other time, and this lack of confidence would have provoked my resentment; but my thoughts were then of other things, and I heeded it not. Catherine and I were ever together; and for hour succeeding hour we sat silent, gazing on each other. O my friend! could your imagination conjure up our feelings and our

thoughts in this hour of trial, you would start, shudder, and think no more. The glance of each was as a pestilence, consuming the other. As the period of her father's return approached, a thousand resolutions crowded within my bosom—some of magnanimity, some of rashness. But I was a coward—morally, I was a coward. Though I feared not the drawn sword nor the field of danger more than another man, yet misery compels me to confess what I was. Every hour, every moment, the sacrifice of parting from her became more painful. Oh! a mother might have torn her infant from her breast, dashed it on the earth, trampled on its outstretched hands, and laughed at its dying screams, rather than that I now could have lived to behold my Catherine another's.

Suddenly, the long, the melancholy charm of my silence broke. I fell upon my knee, and, clenching my hands together, exclaimed—

'Gracious Heaven!—if I be within the pale of thy mercy, spare me this sight! Let me be crushed as an atom—but let not mine eyes see the day when a tongue speaks it, nor mine ears hear the sound that calls her another's.'

I started to my feet, I grasped her hands in frenzy, I exclaimed—'You *shall* be mine!' I took her hand. 'Catherine!' I added, 'you will not—you SHALL not give your hand to another! It is mine, and from mine it shall not part! And I pressed it to my breast as a mother would her child from the knife of a destroyer.

'It SHALL be yours!' she replied wildly; and the feeling of life and consciousness again gushed through her heart. But she sank on my breast, and sobbed—

'My father! O my father!'

'Your father is Sir Peter Blakely's friend,' replied I, 'and he will not break the pledge he has given him. With his return, Catherine, my hopes and life perish together.

Now only can you save yourself—now only can you save me. Fly with me!—be mine, and your father's blessing will not be withheld. Hesitate now, and farewell happiness.'

She hastily raised her head from my breast, she stood proudly before me, and, casting her bright blue eyes upon mine, with a look of piercing inquiry, said—

'Edward! what would you have me to do? Deep as my love for you is—and I blush not to confess it—would you have me to fly with you accompanied by the tears of blighted reputation—followed by the groans and lamentations of a heart-broken father—pointed at by the finger of the world as an outcast of human frailty? Would you have me to break the last cord that binds to existence the only being to whom I am related on earth—for whom have I but my father? My *hand* I shall *never* give to another; but I cannot, I will not leave my father's house. If Catherine Forrester has gained your *love*, she shall not forfeit your *esteem*. I may droop in secret, Edward, as a bud broken on its stem, but I will not be trampled on in public as a worthless weed.'

'Nay, my beloved, mistake me not,' returned I—'when the lamb has changed natures with the wolf, then, but not till then, could I breathe a thought, a word in your presence, that I would blush to utter at the gate of Heaven. Within two days, your father and his intended son-in-law will return, and the father's threats and tears will subdue the daughter's purpose. Catherine will be a wife!—Edward a——

'Speak not impiously,' she cried, imploringly—'what—what can we do?'

'The present moment only is left us,' replied I. 'To-night, become the wife of Edward Fleming, and happiness will be ours.'

Her pulse stood still; the blood rushed into her face and

back to her heart, while her bosom heaved, and her cheeks glowed with the agony of incertitude, as she resolved and re-resolved.

But wherefore should I tire you with a recital of what you already know. That night, my Catherine became my wife. For a few months her father disowned us; but when the fortunes of the Prince began to ripen, through his instrumentality we were again received into his favour. Yet I was grieved to hear, that, in consequence of our marriage, Sir Peter Blakely's mind had become affected; for, while I detested him as a rival, I was compelled to esteem him as a man.

But now, Lewis, comes the misery of my story. You are aware that, before I saw my Catherine, I was a ruined man. Youthful indiscretions—but why call them indiscretions?—rather let me say my headlong sins—before I had well attained the age of manhood, contributed to undermine my estate, and the unhappy political contest in which we were engaged had wrecked it still more. I had ventured all that my follies had left me upon the fortunes of Prince Charles. You know that I bought arms, I kept men ready for the field, I made voyages to France, I assisted others in their distress; and, in doing all this, I anticipated nothing less than an earldom, when the Stuarts should again sit on the throne of their fathers. You had more sagacity, more of this world's wisdom; and you told me I was wrong—that I was involving myself in a labyrinth from which I might never escape. But I thought myself wiser than you. I knew the loyalty and the integrity of my own actions, and with me, at all times, to feel was to act. I had dragged ruin around me, indulging in a vague dream of hope; and now I had obtained the hand of my Catherine, and I had not the courage to inform her that she had wed that of a ruined man.

It was when you and I were at the University together,

that the spirit of gambling threw its deceitful net around me, and my estate was sunk to half its value ere I was of age to enjoy it; the other half I had wrecked in idle schemes for the restoration of the Stuarts. When, therefore, a few weeks after our marriage, I removed with my Catherine to London, I was a beggar, a bankrupt, living in fashionable misery. I became a universal borrower, making new creditors to pacify the clamours of the old, and to hide from my wife the wretchedness of which I had made her a partner. And, O Lewis! the thought that she should discover our poverty, was to me a perpetual agony. It came over the fondest throbbings of my soul like the echo of a funeral bell, for ever pealing its sepulchral boom through the music of bridal joy. I cared not for suffering as it might affect myself; but I could not behold her suffer, and suffer for my sake. I heard words of tenderness fall from her tongue, in accents sweeter than the melody of the lark's evening song, as it chirming descends to fold its wings for the night by the side of its anxious mate. I beheld her smiling to beguile my care, and fondly watching every expression of my countenance, as a mother watches over her sick child; and the half-concealed tear following the smile when her efforts proved unavailing; and my heart smote me that she should weep for me, while her tears, her smiles, and her tenderness, added to my anguish, and I was unable to say in my heart, 'Be comforted.' It could not be affection which made me desirous of concealing our situation from her, but a weakness which makes us unwilling to appear before each other as we really are.

For twelve months I concealed, or thought that I had concealed, the bankruptcy which overwhelmed me as a helmless vessel on a tempestuous sea. But the Prince landed in Scotland, and the war began. I was employed in preparing the way for him in England, and, for a season, wild hopes, that made my brain giddy, rendered me forget-

ful of the misery that had hung over and haunted me. But the brilliant and desperate game was soon over; our cause was lost, and with it my hopes perished; remorse entered my breast, and I trembled in the grasp of ruin. Sir William Forrester effected his escape to France, but his estates were confiscated, and my Catherine was robbed of the inheritance that would have descended to her. With this came another pang, more bitter than the loss of her father's fortune; for he, now a fugitive in a strange land, and unconscious of my condition, had a right to expect assistance from me. The thought dried up my very heart's blood, and made it burn within me—and I fancied I heard my Catherine soliciting me to extend the means of life to her father, which I was no longer able to bestow upon herself: for, with the ruin of our cause, my schemes of borrowing, and of allaying the clamour of creditors, perished.

But it is said that evils come not singly—nor did they so with me; they came as a legion, each more cruel than that which preceded it. Within three weeks after the confiscation of the estates of Sir William Forrester, the individual who held the mortgage upon mine died, and his property passed into the hands—of whom?—heaven and earth! Lewis, I can hardly write it. His property, including the mortgage on my estate, passed into the hands of—Sir Peter Blakely! I could have died a thousand deaths rather than have listened to the tidings. My estate was sunk beyond its value, and now I was at the mercy of the man I had injured—of him I hated. I could not doubt but that, now that I was in his power, he would wring from me his 'pound o' flesh' to the last grain—and he has done it!—the monster has done it! But to proceed with my history.

My Catherine was now a mother, and longer to conceal from her the wretchedness that surrounded us, and was

now ready to overwhelm us, was impossible; yet I lacked the courage, the manliness to acquaint her with it, or prepare her for the coming storm.

But she had penetrated my soul—she had read our condition; and, while I sat by her side buried in gloom, and my soul groaning in agony, she took my hand in hers, and said—

'Come, dear Edward, conceal nothing from me. If I cannot remove your sorrows, let me share them. I have borne much, but, for you, I can bear more.'

'What mean ye, Catherine?' I inquired, in a tone of petulance.

'My dear husband,' replied she, with her wonted affection, 'think not I am ignorant of the sorrow that preys upon your heart. But brood not on poverty as an affliction. You may regain affluence, or you may not; it can neither add to nor diminish my happiness but as it affects you. Only smile upon me, and I will welcome penury. Why think of degradation or of suffering? Nothing is degrading that is virtuous and honest; and where honesty and virtue are, there alone is true nobility, though their owner be a hewer of wood. Believe not that poverty is the foe of affection. The assertion is the oft-repeated, but idle falsehood of those who never loved. I have seen mutual love, joined with content, within the clay walls of humble cotters, rendering their scanty and coarse morsel sweeter than the savoury dainties of the rich; and affection increased, and esteem rose, from the knowledge that they endured privation together, and for each other. No, Edward,' she added, hiding her face upon my shoulder, 'think not of suffering. We are young, the world is wide, and Heaven is bountiful. Leave riches to those who envy them, and affection will render the morsel of our industry delicious.'

My first impulse was to press her to my bosom; but

pride and shame mastered me, and, with a troubled voice, I exclaimed—'Catherine!'

'O Edward!' she continued, and her tears burst forth, 'let us study to understand each other—if I am worthy of being your wife, I am worthy of your confidence.'

I could not reply. I was dumb in admiration, in reverence of virtue and affection of which I felt myself unworthy. A load seemed to fall from my heart, I pressed her lips to mine.

'Cannot Edward be as happy as his Catherine,' she continued; 'we have, at least, enough for the present, and, with frugality, we have enough for years. Come, love, wherefore will you be unhappy? Be you our purser.' And, endeavouring to smile, she gently placed her purse in my hands.

'Good Heavens!' I exclaimed, striking my forehead, and the purse dropped upon the floor; 'am I reduced to this? Never, Catherine!—never! Let me perish in my penury; but crush me not beneath the weight of my own meanness! Death!—what must you think of me?'

'Think of you?' she replied, with a smile, in which affection, playfulness, and sorrow met—'I did not think that you would refuse to be your poor wife's banker.'

'Ah, Catherine!' cried I, 'would that I had half your virtue—half your generosity.'

'The half?' she answered laughingly—'have you not the whole? Did I not give you hand and heart—faults and virtues?—and you, cruel man, have lost the half already! Ungenerous Edward!'

'Oh!' exclaimed I, 'may Heaven render me worthy of such a wife!'

'Come, then,' returned she, 'smile upon your Catherine —*it is all over now.*'

'What is all over, love?' inquired I.

'Oh, nothing, nothing,' continued she, smiling—'merely

the difficulty a young husband has in making his wife acquainted with the state of the firm in which she has become a partner.'

'And,' added I, bitterly, 'you find it bankrupt.'

'Nay, nay,' rejoined she, cheerfully, 'not bankrupt; rather say, beginning the world with a small capital. Come, now, dearest, smile, and say you will be cashier to the firm of Fleming & Co.'

'Catherine!—O Catherine!' I exclaimed, and tears filled my eyes.

'Edward!—O Edward!' returned she, laughing, and mimicking my emotion; 'good by, dear—good by!' And, picking up the purse, she dropped it on my knee, and tripped out of the room, adding gaily—

'For still the house affairs would call her hence.'

Fondly as I imagined that I loved Catherine, I had never felt its intensity until now, nor been aware of how deeply she deserved my affection. My indiscretions and misfortunes had taught me the use of money—they had made me to know that it was an indispensable agent in our dealings with the world; but they had not taught me economy. And I do not believe that a course of misery, continued and increasing throughout life, would ever teach this useful and prudent lesson to one of a warm-hearted and sanguine temperament; nor would any power on earth, or in years, enable him to put it in practice, save the daily and endearing example of an affectionate and virtuous wife. I do not mean the influence which all women possess during the oftentimes morbid admiration of what is called a honeymoon; but the deeper and holier power which grows with years, and departs not with grey hairs—in our boyish fancies being embodied, and our young feelings being made tangible, in the never-changing smile of her who was the sun of our early hopes, the spirit of our dreams—and who,

now, as the partner of our fate, ever smiles on us, and, by a thousand attentions, a thousand kindnesses and acts of love, becomes every day dearer and more dear to the heart where it is her only ambition to reign and sit secure in her sovereignty—while her chains are soft as her own bosom, and she spreads her virtues around us, till they become a part of our own being, like an angel stretching his wings over innocence. Such is the power and influence of every woman who is as studious to reform and delight the husband as to secure the lover.

Such was the influence which, I believed, I now felt over my spirit, and which would save me from future folly and from utter ruin. But I was wrong, I was deceived—yes, most wickedly I was deceived. But you shall hear. On examining the purse, I found that it contained between four and five hundred pounds in gold and bills.

'This,' thought I, 'is the wedding present of her father to my poor Catherine, and she has kept it until now! Bless her! Heaven bless her.'

I wandered to and fro across the room, in admiration of her excellence, and my bosom was troubled with a painful sense of my own unworthiness. I had often, when my heart was full, attempted to soothe its feelings by pouring them forth in rhyme. There were writing materials upon the table before me. I sat down—I could think of nothing but my Catherine, and I wrote the following verses

TO MY WIFE.

Call woman—angel, goddess, what you will—
With all that fancy breathes at passion's call,
With all that rapture fondly raves—and still
That one word—WIFE—outvies—contains them all.
It is a word of music which can fill
The soul with melody, when sorrows fall
Round us, like darkness, and her heart alone
Is all that fate has left to call our own.

Her bosom is a fount of love that swells,
  Widens, and deepens with its own outpouring,
And, as a desert stream, for ever wells
  Around her husband's heart, when cares devouring
Dry up its very blood, and man rebels
  Against his being!—When despair is lowering,
And ills sweep round him, like an angry river,
She is his star, his rock of hope for ever.

Yes; woman only knows what 'tis to mourn
  She only feels how slow the moments glide,
Ere those her young heart loved in joy return
  And breathe affection, smiling by her side.
Hers only are the tears that waste and burn—
  The anxious watchings, and affection's tide
That never, never ebbs!—hers are the cares
No ear hath heard, and which no bosom shares:

Cares, like her spirit, delicate as light
  Trembling at early dawn from morning stars;
Cares, all unknown to feeling and to sight
  Of rougher man, whose stormy bosom wars
With each fierce passion in its fiery might;
  Nor deems how look unkind, or absence, jars
Affection's silver cords by woman wove,
Whose soul, whose business, and whose life is—LOVE.

I left the verses upon the table, that she might find them when she entered, and that they might whisper to her that I at least appreciated her excellence, however little I might have merited it.

Lewis, even in my solitary cell, I feel the blush upon my cheek, when I think upon the next part of my history. My hand trembles to write it, and I cannot now. Methinks that even the cold rocks that surround me laugh at me derision, and I feel myself the vilest of human things. But I cannot describe it to-day—I have gone too far already, and I find that my brain burns. I have conjured up the past, and I would hide myself from its remembrance. Another day, when my brain is cool, when my

hand trembles not, I may tell you all; but, in the shame of my own debasement, my reason is shaken from its throne."

Here ended the first part of the Hermit's manuscript; and on another, which ran thus, he had written the words—

"MY HISTORY CONTINUED."

"I told you, Lewis, where I last broke off my history, that I left the verses on the table for the eye of my Catherine. I doubted not that I would devise some plan of matchless wisdom, and that, with the money so unexpectedly come into my possession, I would redeem my broken fortunes. I went out into the streets, taking the purse with me, scarce knowing what I did, but musing on what to do. I met one who had been a fellow-gambler with me, when at the University.

'Ha! Fleming!' he exclaimed, 'is such a man alive! I expected that you and your Prince would have crossed the water together, or that you would have exhibited at Carlisle or Tower Hill.'

He spoke of the run of good fortune he had had on the previous night—(for he was a gambler still.) 'Five thousand!' said he, rubbing his hands, 'were mine within five minutes.'

'Five thousand!' I repeated. I took my Catherine's purse in my hand.

Lewis! some demon entered my soul, and extinguished reason. 'Five thousand!' I repeated again; 'it would rescue my Catherine and my child from penury.' I thought of the joy I should feel in placing the money and her purse again in her hands. I accompanied him to the table of destruction. For a time fortune, that it might mock my misery, and not dash the cup from my lips until they were parched, seemed to smile on me. But I will not dwell on

particulars; my friend 'laughed to see the madness rise' within me. I became desperate—nay, I was insane—and all that my wife had put into my hands, to the last coin, was lost. Never, until that moment, did I experience how terrible was the torture of self-reproach, or how fathomless the abyss of human wretchedness. I would have raised my hand against my own life; but, vile and contemptible as I was, I had not enough of the coward within me to accomplish the act. I thought of my mother. She had long disowned me, partly from my follies, and partly that she adhered to the house of Hanover. But, though I had squandered the estates which my father had left me, I knew that she was still rich, and that she intended to bestow her wealth upon my sister; for there were but two of us. Yet I remembered how fondly she had loved me; and I did not think that there was a feeling in a mother's breast that could spurn from her a penitent son—for nature, at the slightest spark, bursteth into a flame. I resolved, therefore, to go as the prodigal in the Scriptures, and to throw myself at her feet, and confess that I had sinned against Heaven, and in her sight.

I wrote a note to my injured Catherine, stating that I was suddenly called away, and that I would not see her again perhaps for some weeks. Almost without a coin in my pocket, I took my journey from London to Cumberland, where my mother dwelt.

Night was gathering around me when I left London, on the road leading to St. Alban's. But I will not go through the stages of my tedious journey; it is sufficient to say, that I allowed myself but little time for sleep or rest, and, on the eighth day after my leaving London, I found myself, after an absence of eighteen years, again upon the grounds of my ancestors. Foot-sore, fatigued, and broken down, my appearance bespoke way-worn dejection. I rather halted than walked along, turning my face aside

from every passenger, and blushing at the thought of recognition. It was mid-day when I reached an eminence, covered with elm trees, and skirted by a hedge of hawthorn. It commanded a view of what was called the Priory, the house in which I was born, and which was situated within a mile from where I stood. The village church, surrounded by a clump of dreary yews, lay immediately at the foot of the hill to my right, and the road leading from thence to the Priory crossed before me. It was a raw and dismal day; the birds sat shivering on the leafless branches, and the cold, black clouds, seemed wedged together in a solid mass, ready to fall upon the earth and crush it; and the wind moaned over the bare fields. Yet, disconsolate as the scene appeared, it was the soil of childhood on which I trod. The fields, the woods, the river, the mountains, the home of infancy, were before me; and I felt their remembered sunshine rekindling in my bosom the feelings that make a patriot. A thousand recollections flashed before me. Already did fancy hear the congratulations of my mother's voice, welcoming her prodigal—feel the warm pressure of her hand, and her joyous tears falling on my cheek. But again I hesitated, and feared that I might be received as an outcast. The wind howled around me—I felt impatient and benumbed—and, as I stood irresolute, with a moaning chime the church bell knelled upon my ear. A trembling and foreboding fell upon my heart; and, before the first echo of the dull sound died in the distance, a muffled peal from the tower of the Priory answered back the invitation of the house of death, announcing that the earth would receive its sacrifice. A veil came over my eyes, the ground swam beneath my feet; and again and again did the church bell issue forth its slow, funeral tone, and again was it answered from the Priory.

Emerging from the thick elms that spread around the Priory and stretched to the gate, appeared a long and

melancholy cavalcade. My eyes became dim with a presentiment of dread, and they were strained to torture. Slowly and silently the sable retinue approached. The waving plumes of the hearse became visible. Every joint in my body trembled with agony, as though agony had become a thing of life. I turned aside to watch it as it passed, and concealed myself behind the hedge. The measured and grating sound of the carriages, the cautious trampling of the horses' feet, and the solemn pace of the poorer followers, became more and more audible on my ear. The air of heaven felt substantial in my throat, and the breathing I endeavoured to suppress became audible, while the cold sweat dropt as icicles from my brow. Sadly, with faces of grief, unlike the expression of hired sorrow, passed the solitary mutes; and, in the countenance of each, I recognised one of our tenantry. Onward moved the hearse and its dismal pageantry. My heart fell, as with a blow, within my bosom. For a moment I would have fancied it a dream; but the train of carriages passed on, their grating roused me from my insensibility, and, rushing from the hedge towards one who for forty years had been a servant in our house—

'Robert!—Robert!' I exclaimed, 'whose funeral is this?'

'Alack! Master Edward!' he cried, 'is it you? It is the funeral of my good lady—your mother!'

The earth swam round with me—the funeral procession, with a sailing motion, seemed to circle me—and I fell with my face upon the ground.

Dejected, way-worn as I was, I accompanied the body of my mother to its last resting-place. I wept over her grave, and returned with the chief mourners to the house of my birth; and there I was all but denied admission. I heard the will read, and in it my name was not once mentioned. I rushed from the house—I knew not, and I cared not

where I ran—misery was before, behind, and around me. I thought of my Catherine and my child, and groaned with the tortures of a lost spirit.

But, as I best could, I returned to London, to fling myself at the feet of my wife, to confess my sins and my follies, to beg her forgiveness, yea, to labour for her with my hands. I approached my own door as a criminal. I shrank from the very gaze of the servant that ushered me in, and I imagined that he looked on me with contempt. But now, Lewis, I come to the last act of my drama, and my hand trembles that it cannot write—my soul is convulsed within me. I thought my Catherine pure, sinless as a spirit of heaven—you thought so—all who beheld her must have thought as I did. But, oh! friend of my youth! mark what follows. I reached her chamber. I entered it—silently I entered it, as one who has guilt following his footsteps. And there, the first object that met my sight—that blasted it—was the man I hated, my former rival, he who held my fortunes in his hand—Sir Peter Blakely! My wife, my Catherine, my spotless Catherine, held him by the arm. O heaven! I heard him say—'*Dear Catherine!*' and she answered him, 'Stay!—stay, my best, my only friend—do not leave me!'

Lewis! I could see, I could hear no more.

'Wretch!—villain!' I exclaimed. They started at my voice. My sword, that had done service in other lands, I still carried with me.

'Draw! miscreant!' I cried, almost unconscious of what I said or what I did. He spoke to me, but I heard him not. I sprang upon him, and plunged my sword in his body. My wife rushed towards me. She screamed. I heard the words—'Dear Edward!' but I dashed her from me as an unclean thing, and fled from the house.

Every tie that had bound me to existence was severed

asunder. Catherine had snapped in twain the last cord that linked me with happiness. I sought the solitude of the wilderness, and there shouted her name, and now blessed her, and again——but I will go no farther. I long wandered a fugitive throughout the land, and, at length perceiving an apartment in a rock, the base of which Tweed washes with its waters, in it I resolved to bury myself from the world. In it I still am, and mankind fear me."

Here abruptly ended the manuscript of the Solitary.

A few years after the manuscript had been found, a party, consisting of three gentlemen, a lady, and two children, came to visit the King's Cove, and to them the individual who had found the papers related the story of the hermit.

"But your manuscript is imperfect," said one of them, "and I shall supply its deficiency. The Solitary mentions having found Sir Peter Blakely in the presence of his wife, and he speaks of words that passed between them. But you shall hear all:—

The wife of Edward Fleming was sitting weeping for his absence, when Sir Peter Blakely was announced. He shook as he entered. She started as she beheld him. She bent her head to conceal her tears, and sorrowfully extended her hand to welcome him.

'Catherine,' said he—and he paused, as though he would have called her by the name of her husband—'I have come to speak with you respecting your father's estate. I was brought up upon it; and there is not a tree, a bush, or a brae within miles, but to me has a tale of happiness and langsyne printed upon it, in the heart's own alphabet. But now the charm that gave music to their whispers is changed. Forgive me, Catherine, but it was you that, as the spirit of the scene, converted everything into a paradise where ye trod, that made it dear to me. It was the hope,

the prayer, and the joy of many years, that I should call you mine—it was this that made the breath of Heaven sweet, and caused sleep to fall upon my eyelids as honey on the lips. But the thought has perished. I was wrong to think that the primrose would flourish on the harvest-field. But, Catherine, your father was my guardian—I was deeply in his debt, for he was to me as a father, and for his sake, and your sake, I have redeemed his property, and it shall be—it is yours.'

Lost in wonder, Catherine was for a few moments silent; but she at length said—

'Generous man, it must not—it shall not be. Bury me not—crush me not beneath a weight of generosity which from you I have been the last to deserve. I could not love, but I have ever esteemed you. I still do. But let not your feelings hurry you into an act of rashness. Time will heal, if it do not efface the wounds which now bleed; and you may still find a heart more worthy of your own, with whom to share the fortune of which you would deprive yourself.'

'Never! never!' cried he; 'little do you understand me. Your image and yours only was stamped where the pulse of life throbs in my heart. The dream that I once cherished is dead now—my grey hairs have awoke me from it. But I shall still be your friend—yea, I will be your husband's friend; and, in memory of the past, your children shall be as my children. Your husband's property is encumbered—throw these in the fire and it is again his.' And, as he spoke, he placed the deeds of the mortgage on a table before her.

'Hear me, noblest and best of friends!' cried Catherine —'hear me as in the presence of our Great Judge. Think not that I feel the less grateful for your generosity, that I solemnly refuse your offers, and adjure you to mention

them not in my presence. As the wife of Edward Fleming, I will not accept what he would spurn. Rather would I toil with the sweat of my brow for the bare crust that furnished us with a scanty meal; and if I thought that, rather than share it with me, he would sigh after the luxuries he has lost, I would say unto him—'Go, you are free!' and, hiding myself from the world, weary Heaven with prayers for his prosperity.'

'Ye talk in vain—as I have said, so it is and shall be,' added he. 'And now, farewell, dear Catherine.'

'Stay! stay!—leave me not thus!' she exclaimed, and grasped his arm. At that moment her husband returned and entered the room—and you know the rest. But, Sir Peter Blakely was not mortally wounded, as the Solitary believed. In a few months he recovered, and what he had promised to do he accomplished."

"That is something new," said the fisherman who had found the manuscript; "and who told ye, or how do ye know?—if it be a fair question."

"I," replied he who had spoken, "am the Lewis to whom the paper was addressed."

"You! you!" exclaimed the fisherman; "well, that beats a'—the like o' that I never heard before."

"And I," said another, "am Sir Peter Blakely—the grey-haired dreamer—who expected the April lily to bloom beneath an October sun." And he put a crown into the hand of the fisherman.

"And I," added the third, "am the Solitary himself—this my Catherine, and these my children. He whom I thought dead—dead by my own hand—the man whom I had wronged—sought for me for years, and in this my hermitage that was, he at length found me. It was the grey dawn when I beheld him, and I thought that the ghost of the murdered stood before me. But he spoke—he uttered

words that entered my soul. I trembled in his presence. The load of my guiltiness fell as a weight upon me. I was unable to speak, almost to move. He took my hand and led me forth as a child. In my confusion the papers which you found were left behind me. And now, when happiness has shed its light around me, I have come with my benefactor, my friend, my Catherine, and my children, to view the cell of my penitence."

## THE MAIDEN FEAST OF CAIRNKIBBIE.

He who has been present at a real Maiden, or Scotch feast of harvest-home, if it should happen that he belongs to the caste that makes the light fantastic toe the fulcrum of the elegant motions of the quadrille, and Hogarth's line of beauty the test of the evolutions of modern grace, might wish that the three sisters had long ago resigned their patronage of the art of dancing, and left the limbs of man, and their motions, to the sole power of the spirit of fun and good humour. Centuries have passed away since first the Maiden called forth the salient energies of the harvest-weary hinds and rosy-cheeked damsels of Scotland. We have only now amongst us the ghost of the old spirit-stirring genius of "the farmer's ha'." The modern vintage feast is only a shadow of the old *Cerealia*—the festival of festivals, as it has been called—at which the young and the old of ancient Greece and Rome resigned themselves to the power of the rosy god, and the *nil placet sine fructu* was seen in every bright eye, heard in every glad voice, and listened to in every tripping measure. The Scotch Maiden was once what the vintage feasts of the Continent were, and still are. The hinds and maids of one "town" were present at the harvest-home of another; reciprocal visits kept up the spirit of the enjoyment; the fields and farmers' ha's resounded with the merry pipe; the whirling reel mixed up the dancers in its "uniform confusion;" the flowing bicker was "filled and kept fou;" kisses, "long and loud," vindicated a place in the world of musical sound; and the Genius of Pleasure ran away with heart and soul to her happy regions—declaring that, for one solitary

night in the year, the power of sorrow should have no authority over mournful man. The Maiden of Cairnkibbie, a farm on the property of Faulden—too long ago for the mention of a specific period, but while Maidens (to descend to a pun) were still in the height of their beauty and bloom—was one of the most joyous scenes that ever graced the green, or made the rafters of the barn ring with "hey and how rohumbelow." The farmer, William Hume—some far-off friend of the Paxton family—was rich, as things went in those days; and a gaucy dame, and a fair daughter, Lilly, blessed him with affection and duty. No lass ever graced a Maiden like Lilly Hume; and no free farmer's wife ever extended so hearty a patronage to the feast of fun as did the sleek and comfortable guidwife of Cairnkibbie. The pretty "damysell" was as jimp as "gillie"—

> "As ony rose her rude was red,
> Her lire was like the lillie."

and far and near she defied all manner of bold competition in those charms that go to deck the blooming maids of Scotland. Natural affection made her the pride of her parents; and a simplicity that did not seem to have art enough to tell her of her own beauty, endeared her to those who might have been expected to have been smitten with envy, or crossed with a hopeless passion.

There was many a lass "as myld as meid" at the Maiden of Cairnkibbie, and many a Jock, and Steenie, and Robyne, as braw as yellow locks brushed bolt upright in the face of heaven could make any of God's creatures. But many of the merry-makers did not trust to such ornaments of nature: for Steenie Thornton, from the town of Kelton, the gay lover of Jess Swan from the same town, had his locks tied behind with a yellow ribbon got from her fair hand, and his "pumps" boasted the same decoration; the sprightly Will Aitken, the best hand at a

morris-dance in all the Merse, had his jacket "browden" with "fowth o' roses" stuck into the button-holes by Jean Gillies from Westertown; the fiercest wrestler of the Borders, Jock Hedderick, who cherished Bess Gibson, pushed forward his bold breast, to exhibit to the goggle eyes of wondering admiration a vest sewed by her delicate fingers at intervals stolen from cheese-making; and Pat Birrel, the noted scaumer, who was accounted more than "twa hen clokkis" by Kirsty Glen the henwife's daughter of Earlston, lifted his feet high in mid-air, to shew the gushets in his hose wrought by her lily hands. Nor did the screechin gilpies lack ornaments to set off their fair persons. Some had bright yellow gloves of "raffal right;" and many, with kirtles of "Lincome light, weel prest wi' mony plaits," pulled the trains in most menacing bundles through the pocket-holes, to shew at once how bright were their colours, and how many a "breid" was wasted in their amplitude. Many had ornaments that tongue could not describe—because they were the first of their kind, and required a new vocabulary to do justice to their beauties. But, ornamented or plain, the revellers were all alike filled with the spirit of the Maiden; and, if their "Tam Lutar," the piper, did not skirl them up to the point of enjoyment to which they all struggled, and danced, and drank, and screamed to get, sure it was that no fault was attributable to the merry-makers themselves: nor was the guidman's daughter, Lilly Hume, less joyous than the merriest. Although at her father's harvest-feast she was accounted a lady, she was the humblest of the "hail menyie;" and never refused to draw up through her pocket-holes the ends of her falling yellow kirtle, as a preparation for another reel, at the supplicatory bend or bow of the humblest hind, albeit he was adorned with neither bright crimson nor ochre yellow.

The "Tam Lutar" of the feast—a blind piper, who be-

gan to play when he first felt the incipient effects of the first bicker, blew stronger as the fumes of the potations rose higher, declined as the liquid impulse fell, and even stopped when the drink entirely sunk—was well supplied with the "piper's coig," a girded vessel of jolly good ale, that lay beside him, and was ever and anon filled, as the dancers felt the music beginning to lag in spirit. Away they flew, to the airs of "Gillquhisker," "Brum on tul," "Tortee Solee Lemendow," and other good old tunes, now forgotten, though their names are mentioned by Sir James Ingles; the resilent heels spurned the earth; the fore part of the foot, where the spring lies, dealt out those tremendous thuds on the suffering floor which heretofore were reckoned the true and legitimate soul of dancing, and now, alas! displaced by the sickly *slip* of the French grace; the "dancing whoop" rung around, inspired every soul, and lightened every heel; Jock Splaefut "bobbit up wi' bends;" and Jenny set to him, and "beckit," and set again, and turned, and away glided through the mazes of the reel—

"For reeling there micht nae wench rest;"

and came back, and set and "beckit" again; till, "forfochtin faynt" with pure dancing toil, the reelers gave place to the country dancers, who toiled and *swat* in the same degree for the period of their sweet labours. Then was the breathing time in the far corners appropriated to the cooling tankard, the dew of which left on the panting lips ran a considerable risk of being dried up by the heat of love, elicited from the kiss that smacked of love and ale.

At a corner in the end of the room, a crowd had collected; and some high words were passing between Will Aitken and Jock Hedderick, on a question that seemed to interest the dancers. Those standing about were washing down large mouthfuls of bannocks by draughts of strong beer, while they wiped the sweat from their brows, and

listened to the subject in dispute. At intervals some one was heard at the door, playing and singing.

"He played sae schill, an' sang sae sweet,"

that Lilly Hume felt interested in the musician. He was a beggar, who boldly claimed admittance to the Maiden, by what he called the "auld rights o' the gaberlunzies of Scotland," who were declared entitled to enter into the feast of the harvest home, to dance thereat, and drink thereat and kiss the "damysells" thereat, with as much freedom as the gayest guest. This demand was resisted by Joel Hedderick, who besides disputed the authority of the ancient custom; which, on the other hand, was upheld by Will Aitken, whose supple tongue was so powerful over his opponents that

"He muddelt them down like ony mice;"

and, notwithstanding the terror of the scaumer's arm, prevailed upon the guidman and the company to hold sacred the rights of hospitality of the land, and admit the "pauky auld carle," with his pipes and his wallets. As soon as the decision was given, Lilly ran to the door, and, taking the gaberlunzie by the hand, brought him in. A loud laugh resounded throughout the room, to the profit of the proud and merry dancers, and at the expense of the jolly beggar, who, young and stalwart, and borne down by sundry appendages, containing doubtless meal and bread, "cauk and keil," "spindles and quhorles," and all the et-ceteras of the wallet, stood before them, and raised in return such a ranting, roaring laugh, as well apparently at himself as his company, that, by that one effort of his lungs, he made more friends than many a laughter-loving pot companion might make in a year. Then in an instant he struck this merry-maker on the back, and slapped that on the shoulder, and kissed the skirling kitties with such a jolly and hearty spirit of free salutation, that he even

added flame to the already burning passion of frolic, and raised again the rafter-shaking laugh, till it drowned all the energies of Lutar himself, albeit his coig had that instant been filled.

But this was only vanity, while the stomach of the jolly gaberlunzie was as yet empty. A large stoup was brought to him by Will Carr, a good-looking young man of gentle demeanour, the only person who in that pairing assembly seemed to want his "dow." A shade of melancholy was on his cheek, and, as he offered the gaberlunzie the stoup, he cast an eye on Lilly, the meaning of which seemed to be read in an instant by the beggar.

"Ha! ha!" cried the latter; "ye are the true welcomer, my braw youth. Thae wild chiels an' their glaiket hizzies wad fill the beggar wi' the sound o' his ain laugh, as if he were a pair o' walking bagpipes. But, ho, man, this is sour yill.

> The bridegroom brought a pint of ale,
> And bade the piper drink it.
> 'Drink it?' quoth he, 'and it so staile;
> Ashrew me, if I think it!'

Ye've anither barrel in the corner yonder—awa!—the beggar maun hae the best.

> This Maiden nicht it is his right,
> And, faith he winna blink it."

And so he cadgily ranted and sang, swearing that the best ale and the prettiest lips in the whole house should that night be at his command.

While Will Carr brought him ale out of another cask, Lilly Hume took away his wallets, and laid them in a window-sole at his back. Having taken a waught of the ale so long that the bystanders looked on with fear, lest he might never recover his breath again, he returned the stoup empty to Will, telling him to fill it again, as he intended to assist the legitimate Lutar in blowing up the spirits of the company—a work which would require

"fowth o' yill." Without farther preface, he blew up his bags with a skirl that seemed to shake the house, and, dashing fearlessly into the time, poured so much joyous sound into the thick air of the heated apartment, that the weary-limbed dancers threw off their languor, and fell to it again with a spirit that equalled that of their first off-set. But his musical occupation did not prevent his attention to the looks and actions of Lilly Hume and Will Carr.

"How dinna ye dance, hinny?" said he, in a low voice to Lilly. "How dinna ye dance, man?" he repeated, as he turned his head to Will. "Think ye yer sittin there's a compliment to me, wha am blawing awa my lungs here, for the very purpose o' makin ye dance?"

The two young people looked at each other, and then at the guidman, who sat at a little distance.

"Tell me the reason, my bonny hinny," he added; and, as he blew again, leant his ear to hear the answer. "Eh! come now, my white lily," he persisted. "I'm a safe carle, and can spae fortunes as well as blaw up thae green bags wi' thriftless wind. I may tell ye o' a braw lot, if ye'll only open yer lips and gie me some o' yer secrets."

"My faither winna let me dance wi' Will Carr," at last replied Lilly, blushing from ear to ear.

"How! how!" answered the gaberlunzie, taking the pipes suddenly frae his mouth—"no let ye dance wi' a decent callant, the bonniest hensure o' the hail menyie! What crime has he committed, hinny? Eh?"

"He's puir," answered Lilly, innocently.

"Ha! a red crime that, Lilly," answered he; "if he had killed a score o' God's creatures in a Border raid, he micht hae been forgi'en; but wha forgies poverty? But do ye like Will Carr, hinny?"

"My faither and mither say sae," answered Lilly.

"Ay, ay,—I see whar the wind blaws," said the gaberlunzie. "But ye *will* dance wi' him. I, as a beggar, hae a richt to the fairest hand o' the maiden—yer faither daurna refuse ye to me; an' let Will tak yon quean wi' the yellow ribbons in her wimple, an' we'll a' mix in ae reel. Will, man, awa an' ask yon bloomin hizzy wi' the rose rude to dance wi' ye."

Will obeyed; and the beggar, having brought the tune to a termination, stepped boldly up into the middle of the floor, holding by the hand the fair Lilly Hume; while Will, with his blushing quean, Bess Gordon, took their stations opposite.

"Up wi' the 'Hunts o' Cheviot,' Tam," cried the beggar; "an blaw as if ye wad blaw yer last. Gie him yill there, an' I'll play for him a hail hour, if he gars the roof-tree o' Cairnkibbie dirl to the gaberlunzie's dance."

The expectation of a merry bout brought others to the floor, and even the guidman and guidwife of Cairnkibbie, themselves, rose and "buckled to the wark," as cleverly as the youngest gipsy of the whole assembly. Then up blew the "Hunts o' Cheviot," in the quickest of Tam's ale-inspired manner, and away banged the jolly gaberlunzie, as if the spirit of Cybele's priests had seized his heart; "and like a lyon lap," as if he would have foreleeted Lightfute himself, and "counterfeited Frans." He clapped his hands, till the echoes came back from the roof; and the exhilarating hoogh! hoogh! which can only be given forth by the throat of a Scotchman, when good liquor has wet it and fired the brain that moves it, was heard by every ear, and felt by every heart. The very piper was delighted with the ranting chield, and ever, as his clap and hoogh! hoogh! resounded through the barn, the yells of the pipes seemed to rise higher and higher, and echoes of the same sounds came from the imitative spirits of the dancers.

"Hurra for the gaberlunzie!" shouted Will Aitken.

"The jolly beggar, for ever!" cried Steenie Thornton; and the smiles of the hizzies, and occasional slaps on the back, administered to the jolly roisterer, as they met and passed him in the midst of the reel, testified their most perfect satisfaction with the king of his tribe.

"Here, Will, here man," whispered the beggar, as he rioted in his wild humour, and twirled Will Carr about to face Lilly, while he left her for Bess Gordon. "Set to her, man, and dinna spare a kiss and a good squeeze o' her hand, as ye see the auld anes' backs to ye."

And then he drowned his remark with his hoogh! hoogh! sprung up yard high, and clapped his knees opposite the blooming Bess, who would not have given her jolly new partner for a' the Will Carrs in Scotland.

"Change the measure, Tam," cried the beggar, as he foresaw the termination of "The Hunts of Cheviot." "Up wi' 'King William's Note,' man. Fill his coig, ye lazy loons! Noo, Tam!—hoogh! hoogh!—there up yet, higher and higher, man—hoogh, hoogh!"

The piper felt the inspiration, up mounted the notes to the highest and liveliest measure, and away again flew the merry dancers under all the impulse of the new tune. The clap on the beggar's knee ever and anon run along, and still he twirled round Will Carr to face Lilly—though not before he had taken her round the fair neck, and kissed her, "nothing loath"—and again presented himself to the welcome face of Bess, whose rosy lips he "pree'd" as often as his many laborious evolutions, hooghs, claps, and cries to the piper would permit. He even made *tacks* to the side reels, and, laying hold of the damsels of his neighbours, kissed them from lug to lug, and then came back with a roar of laughter behind him, to greet of new Bess Gordon, to whom he seemed more welcome for his gallantry. The guidwife of Cairnkibbie herself was violently laid hold of

round the neck and saluted with a loud smack, which, sounding in the ears of the guidman, produced a hearty laugh at the boldness, which was excused by the reckless jollity of the extraordinary gaberlunzie. Nor did he yet allow them to flag.

"Keep at it, Will!" he cried to the young man. "Ye'll hae aneuch o' Lilly for ae nicht, or my name's no Wat Wilson. Aneuch o' 'King William's Note,' Tam. Come awa wi' anither—'In Simmer I mawed my meadow,' wi' double quick time. Look to his bicker there, ye culroun knaves, wha'll neither dance, drink, nor mak drink!"

The piper heard the appeal, and struck up the new tune with great glee—

"Gude Lord, how he did lans!"

And again the inspiring strain, coming in a new measure, filled the dancers with new energies. There never had been such a reel since ever reels were danced. Heaven knows how long it had lasted, and yet the performers felt no weariness, all through the inspiring devilry, as they termed it, of the gaberlunzie, whose war-cry was as loud and uproarious as ever, and his leaps in the air as high as they had been at the first off-go. He now played off a new trick. He twirled round the partner of the next reel, and made him take his place before Bess Gordon, while he, ambitious of a new face, took the place of his neighbour, and continued the sport in his new locality and company. Bess regretted her change; but his new position was soon changed, for he played the same trick with the next reeling party, and so on through the whole four—for such was the number up at once; and he continued to "pree the mou's" of every young maiden on the floor, and, returning with many a hoogh, and clap, and leap to his old position, he seemed inclined to keep up the sport till the elder dancers should drop to the ground with sheer fatigue. It seemed to the guidman of Cairnkibbie that there was no

remedy but a nod to Piper Tam, who, himself almost blown out, observed with pleasure the master's indication, and stopped the music even in the very midst of the leaping joy of the interminable gaberlunzie, who would have danced apparently till next moon, if he could have got any one strong enough and willing enough to dance with him.

He was now a universal favourite; all flocked round him as he wiped the perspiration from his forehead, and declared they had never seen such a spirited dancer before. His name, Wat Wilson, flew through the barn, and every one wondered how they had never seen such a jolly beggar in those parts before. But Wat said nothing of his *unde*, his *ubi*, or his *quo;* he only drank to the crowd around him; and, with Lilly on one side of him, and Will Carr on the other, he seized again his own pipes, and, forcing Tam to his feet, and crying to a new party to start, struck up one of the liveliest airs that the folks of the Merse had ever heard. In an instant again the barn was resounding with mirth; his strains were irresistible.

> "Then all the wenches te he they playit,
> And loud as Will Aitken leuche;
> But nane cried, Gossip, hyn your gaits,
> For we have dansit aneugh."

At least none cried they had danced enough while the beggar played; for the very heels seemed to obey the influence of his spirit, as if they had been gifted with some power of sympathy, independently of the bodies to which they were attached. The dance was kept up till the dancers tired—for the beggar's lungs were as tough as his feet; and when all had, for a time, tired of dancing, they assembled round their guest, who, of his own accord, struck up many a ranting song, and, by his humour, made the laugh resound through the barn. So fond grew they of his song and his jokes, that they felt no inclination, for a time, to resume

again the dance. They drank and laughed, and screamed at every new sally of his wit, and every humorous turn of his song; and no one knows how long this scene might have lasted—for the gaberlunzie seemed inexhaustible—when a sound of horses' feet at the door claimed the attention of the revellers, and some one cried out that a party of horsemen were come to demand the body of a thief, who had that day, at Dunse, stolen the silver mace of King James, and was suspected to be at this Maiden, under the assumed dress of a wandering piper.

"That is the man," cried a belted knight, as, having dismounted, he trod forward into the middle of the barn, and pointed to the happy gaberlunzie, who had that instant finished his song.

"Ye lee," answered the beggar, in an instant, as he stood up, surrounded by his friends.

"Ha, sirrah!" answered the stranger, "this boldness will avail thee nothing. I know thee; and these, thy new-made friends, will not save thee from the execution of our orders. There are witnesses against thee, who saw thee steal the silver mace. Forward, ye sooth-saying men!"

Two men entered, dressed nearly in the same style as the first, and bearing all the marks and insignia of the grade of Knights.

"Is not this the thief?" inquired the first.

"It is—we will swear to him. He snatched the mace from the royal mace-bearer, in the streets of Dunse, and made off with it amidst the hue and cry of the populace, whose speed he outran as he would that of the greyhound."

"Guid faith," replied the guidman of Cairnkibbie, "if our friend ran as cleverly as he has danced this nicht, a' the greyhounds o' the Merse wadna hae catched him."

"Will ye gie me up to the beadles, freends," cried the

beggar, "or will ye stand by him wha has sought yer protection, and partaken o' yer hospitality?"

"Gie ye up!" ejaculated the spirited old farmer; "in faith, na. If King Jamie war the Cham o' Tartary, or had three kings' heads on his shouthers in place o' ane, we'll defend ye while there's a flail in the barn o' Cairnkibbie."

A shout of approbation followed the speech of the old farmer. The maidens, whose chins still smarted from the rub of his jolly beard, flew for flail, and rung, and "hissil ryss," and in an instant every willing hand held a weapon.

"We'll defend him to the last drap o' oor bluid," cried Will Carr, as he manfully stood forward, and brandished a huge hazel rung.

"And, by my saul," cried the scaumer, Jock Hedderick; "if we fecht as he'll fecht, whether for auld feid or new, noytit pows and broken banes will tell the fortune o' the nicht, lang before the play's played."

"Ha, ha! guidmen, and trüe guidmen, and true!" cried the beggar, undaunted and laughing; "thank ye, my hinny, Lilly, for this green kevel! By the haly rude, come on now, ye silver-necklaced bull-dogs o' royalty:—

'The beggar was o' manly mak,
To meet him was nae mows,
There darena ten come him to tak,
Sae noyt will he their pows.'

Ye should ken that sang, if ye hae lear aneugh in your steel-bound noddles. Come on, ye calroun caitiffs!"

"Search his wallet," cried the foremost of the strangers; and six or seven men rushed into the barn, and made direct for the window-sole pointed to by the chief; but Will Swan and Will Carr, with half a dozen more stout hensures, flew forward and anticipated the searchers.

"Give me my meal-pocks," cried the gaberlunzie; and, having got hold of his wallet, he slung it over his shoulders, and, to the surprise of every one, took out the mace said

to have been stolen, and, holding it in his left hand as a badge of his authority, continued, laughing like a cadger, to gibe the strangers—

"Beggars hae a king as weel as belted bannerets," he cried: "see ye my badge? Ken ye wha ye seek? Heard ye ne'er o' Wat Wilson the king o' the beggars, crowned on Hogmanay, on the Warlock's Hill near Dunse, in presence o' a' the tribe o' kaukers and keelars, collected from Berwick to Lerwick. This is the beggar's badge. Tak it if ye dare. By ae wag o't, yer bairns will be kidnapped, your kye yeld, and your mithers' banes stricken wi' the black sickness."

"Guidman of Cairnkibbie," said the foremost knight, "thou hast now evidence in that bold beggar's own hand, that he hath stolen a part of the king's regalia—an act of high treason, incurring death to him and all that give him shelter. Take the badge, examine it, and thou'lt find on it the royal arms. See to thy predicament. If I report a rescue, thou'rt ruined. James will punish thee as a resetter. These misguided men will fall in thy ruin, and sorely wilt thou repent having harboured and defended a thief and a vagabond. Wilt thou give him up, or must we take him at the expense of our blood and thine?"

"A' fair words," answered the guidman; "but this beggar is our guest. He says the badge is his ain, and truly I am bound to say that King Jamie himsel is nae mair like the king o' this auld land, than this jolly gaberlunzie is like the king o' his tribe. Every inch o'm's a king. He sings like a king, dances like a king, drinks like a king, and kisses the lasses like a king—and, king as he is, feth we'll be his loyal subjects. What say ye, guid hearts?"

"The same, the same," cried many voices; and a brandishing of flails and kevels showed that they were determined to act up to their pledge of defending the jolly

gaberlunzie to the end. Matters now assumed a serious aspect.

"Thy ruin be on thine own heads!" cried the chief of the strangers. "Draw for the rights of King James, claim our prisoner, and take him through the blood of rebels who dispute the authority of their king!"

The men from without now began to rush into the barn with drawn swords; and seemed to expect that, when the steel was made apparent, no serious resistance would be offered. Their expectation, however, was vain; for the hinds did not seem to fear the naked swords, and several of them had already aimed blows at the heads of the enemy. The beggar was moving to the right and to the left with great rapidity; brandishing his huge kevel, and whispering something into the ears of his friends. The guidman was busy getting the women removed by a back door; and, in the midst of all the uproar, there seemed some scheme in operation on the part of the defenders, which would either co-operate with their warlike defence, or render the shedding of blood unnecessary. The assailants clearly did not wish to use the glittering thirsty blades; and continued to ward off the blows of the hinds, and to push them back, with a view to get hold of him who was the object of their search. He, in the meantime, was directing some secret operation with great adroitness and spirit. The confusion increased; the size of the barn, and the pressure of the assailants forward, apparently with a view to take away the power of the long sticks, prevented in a great measure the full play of the hinds' arms, and some of the king's men were engaged in a powerful wrestle, with the intention of disarming the hinds, and thus achieving a victory without loss of blood; but their efforts in this respect would have been attended with small success, if the tactics of the beggar had been a deadly contest. The assailants still pushed on, and it seemed that their op-

ponents were fast receding, while the clanging of sticks on the swords, and the hard breathing and cries of those engaged, seemed to indicate a severe and equally contested strife. The defendants were latterly pushed up to the very farthest end of the apartment, and it seemed apparent that, if they did not make a great effort to redeem their position, and acquire room for the circle of their staves, they must resign the contest. But an extraordinary evolution was now performed. The back door was opened; in an instant, every hind disappeared from the faces of their foes; the door was locked and bolted; and the king's men turned to retrace their steps and seek the enemy outside. That turn exposed their position, and the trick of the gaberlunzie. The front door was also shut, locked, and riveted. On every side they were shut in, confined in a dark barn, and all means of escape entirely cut off. It was in vain that they roared through the key-holes of the doors. The gaberlunzie, who regulated all the motions of the successful party, responded to them in words of cutting irony, and even set agoing the swelling notes of his pipes, to celebrate his triumph by a pœan in the form of a pibroch.

"Ye may tell yer king," he cried, loud enough for them to hear—"that is, when ye get out, if ye ever experience that blessed fortune—that he is not the only king in these realms. And surely Scotland is wide enough for twa. I hae my subjects, he has his; an' Wat Wilson's no the potentate that wad ever interfere wi' Jamie Stuart, if Jamie Stuart will let alane Wat Wilson. If I happen to pass Dunse on the morn, I shauna fail to report favourably o' yer prowess; an', abune a', I shall tell him o' the condition o' his belted knichts—how,

> 'There was not ane o' them that day
> Could do ane ither's bidden,
> And there lie three and thretty knights
> Thrunland in ane midden.'

Come now, my friends, we'll adjourn the feast to the ha', an' let the knights tak their nicht's rest in the barn, after a' the toil o' their desperate battle."

A loud shout responded to the spirited speech of the gaberlunzie; and the feelings of the kidnapped and discomfited men-at-arms, on hearing the triumph of the beggar, who had out-manœuvred them, may be conceived, but could not well be expressed by an ordinary goose-quill. The guidman of Cairnkibbie took as hearty a laugh as the rest, at the trick thus successfully played off upon the king's men, and his laugh was nothing the less for the quantity of good ale he had drank before the fray began, and without which potation, perhaps, he would not have patronised an act which might bring him into trouble. There was one thing that, even through the fumes of the ale, struck him as very remarkable—the confined knights made scarcely any noise. There was no blustering or swearing of vengeance, nor threat of the king's displeasure, nor endeavours to break the doors. They submitted to their durance like lambs in a sheepfold, and seemed to have lost their spirits as well as courage, when they found themselves completely within the power of their enemy. What could this mean? There was a mystery in it, which the farmer, who was an arch old fox, could not explain; and when he put a question to the gaberlunzie, the answer increased his difficulty, for the beggar laughed, and attributed the quietness and meekness of the foes to the terror of his prowess, and the awe which his name inspired throughout a great part of Scotland.

"This is the most extraordinary deevil," said the farmer to himself, "that it has been my fortune to meet. His dancing, roaring, rioting, drinking, piping, singing, joking, feehting, seem a' on a par; an' nane o' them are beat by his power o' winning the hearts o' young an' auld. He has forced me to like him, will I or nill I; an' my dochter

Lilly, an' my guidwife Jean, are nae less fond o' him than I am. Here, noo, is our Maiden broken up, my barn made a warhold, mysel a seneschal o' the king's troops, my head in a loop, an' my fortunes hanging in the wind o' the royal displeasure—a' brocht aboot by a wanderin beggar, wha forced himsel into oor happy meeting at the very point o' the bauldest tongue that ever hung in man's head; an' yet sae supple that it has won the very hearts o' the men that strove to keep him oot, an' brocht me into the hardest scrape I ever was in my life."

Cogitating in this prudential way, the guidman was fast coming to the conclusion that he was in a position of great danger; and that it was necessary that he should take the proper steps for freeing himself from the consequences of his imprudence as soon as it was possible. He turned round to look for the gaberlunzie, that he might commune with him on the prudence of letting the king's men free. The greater number of the men and women had gone into the house; and some of them stood at a distance, their forms revealed by a glimpse of the moon, which, freed from a cloud, began to illumine the holms of Cairnkibbie.

"Where is the beggar?" inquired the farmer at Will Carr.

"Where is the beggar?" cried Will Carr to his neighbour.

"Where is the gaberlunzie?" shouted several voices at once.

The gaberlunzie was gone. Steenie Thornton said he saw a person mount one of the troopers' horses that stood at the door of the barn, and, turning round the corner of the steading, gallop off at the top of his speed. He thought it was one of the hinds, who was trying the mettle of the king's horses, and would return instantly, after he had indulged himself with a ride. Now it was apparent to all that it was the strange gaberlunzie himself. He had

crowned all his extraordinary actions of the evening by stealing one of the horses of the king, or his knights, and, with meal-pocks, wallet, pipes, and stolen mace, was "owre the Borders and awa," and might never be seen or heard of again; while the farmer, who now saw the extent of his danger, must stand the brunt of the king's vengeance, and be tried for forcing the king's messengers in the execution of their duty, for shutting them up in his barn, and stealing (for he would be charged with it) one of the horses, the property of his sovereign. The whole company now assembled around the farmer, whose position was apparent to the bluntest hind that ever danced at a Maiden. Some proposed to follow the beggar, and bring him back again; but he had already exhibited such a power of locomotive energy and daring spirit in the former adventures of the evening, that it seemed vain to attempt to overtake him with the quickest steed that was at their command. The difficulty was great, and, apparently, insuperable; and the whole scene enacted by the guberlunzie appeared like a dream. The farmer swore against him mighty oaths, and directed against himself a part of the objurgatory declamation. But how was he to get out of the scrape? If the doors were opened, and the armed knights let loose, the whole company might be slaughtered, in the fury of the enraged men-at-arms, who would attribute to the farmer and his men their discomfiture, the loss of the thief, their confinement, and the loss of the horse. To keep them confined was also a fearful resource; for they must be let out *some time*, and every minute of their confinement would add fuel to the flame of their resentment. Many opinions were given. Some were for getting assistance to enable them to stand on the defensive, against the expected attack, on the knights being let free. Some again were for striking a bargain "wi' the fou hand," as the saying goes, and letting the

pursuers free, upon their word of a knight that they would not molest them. This latter plan seemed the best; and a good addendum was made by the greatest simpleton of the whole meeting—viz., that they should include in this act of amnesty the loss of the horse. The farmer proceeded to act upon this resolution.

"We are friendly inclined to ye," said he, in a tone of voice that might reach the prisoners. "Your enemy was that accursed gaberlunzie, wha maun be the very deevil himsel; for he it was wha blew us up against ye, and made us, a parcel o' quiet men, fecht against the servants o' our lawfu king. The cunning rogue's awa, and left us to bear the dirdum o' his feint or folly; and, a' ungeared as we are for war, we wish, withoot either dewyss or devilry, to ken the condition upon which ye will get yer liberty."

A loud laugh from within was the reply to this speech. What next could this mean? The farmer was confounded, the hinds stared, and every one looked at another. Here were men who five minutes before were fighting like fiends, who had been deceived and confined, struck and ill-used, indulging in a good jolly laugh at the broaching of a question concerning their liberty. The mystery was increased, the affair was more extraordinary, the development more difficult and distant.

"Ay, ay," continued the farmer, "ye may laugh; but, maybe, the laugh may be on the ither side when ye get oot. This may be an assumed guid nature, to blind us. I'm as far ben as ye, though no in the barn. Come, come. It is a serious affair. Will ye pledge the honour o' a knight, that, if I draw the bolts, ye'll let alane for let alane?"

"Surely, surely," was the ready reply, and another laugh accompanied the condition.

"Right merry prisoners, by my saul!" continued the

farmer. "Will they laugh at the loss o' their horse, I wonder?" (To his friends.)

"That's a' very weel," he continued, in a higher voice. "I hae witnesses here to the pledge; but I'm sorry to inform ye that that deevil o' a beggar, wha stole yer king's mace, is aff and awa, the Lord kens whaur, wi' the best horse o' a' yer cavalcade. Will ye forgie this to the boot?"

Another burst of laughter responded from the barn, mixed with cries of—

"Ay, ay; never mind the horse. Let him go with the mace. The king of the beggars deserveth a steed."

"Weel, these are the maist pleasant faes I ever saw," said the farmer; "but I hae a' my fears there's a decoy duck i' the pond. Haud firm yer kevels, friends, in case a' this guid nature may, like the blink o' an autumn sun, be followed by the fire-flaughts o' their revenge."

The men stood prepared to fight, if necessary; the bolts were withdrawn, and out came the knights, as merry as larks, making the air resound with their laughter. The farmer and his friends were still more amazed, as, for their very souls, they could see nothing in discomfiture and imprisonment to make any man laugh. But the fact was now certain, that the prisoners were right glad and hearty; and the sincerity of their good humour was to be tested in a manner that seemed as extraordinary as anything that had yet been witnessed on this eventful evening. Not one of them ever mentioned the beggar or the loss of the horse —a circumstance remarkable enough; and, not contented with this scrupulous regard of the treaty, the chief of them, slapping the farmer on the back, proposed that, as they had so unceremoniously broken up the sports of the evening, they should not depart till they saw the dancing again commenced, and till they each and every man of them should dance a reel with the blooming maidens they had seen on their entry. This request, though as remark-

able as the former proceedings, was received with loud applause. The parties were again collected; Tam the piper again took his seat; the ale flowed in its former abundance; and in a short time the brave knights were seen tripping it gaily through the mazes of the merry dance. This was another change of the moral peristrephic panorama of that extraordinary evening; and, as the farmer looked at the merry knights with their surtouts of green, and their buff baldricks and clanging swords, busy dancing in that very barn where they had, a few minutes before, been fighting like Turks, he held up his hands in wonder, and would have moralised on the chances and changes of life, if a barn had been a proper place, a Maiden a proper occasion, and the hour of relief from a great evil a proper time for the indulgence of such fancies.

The knights danced only for a very short time; and there can be no doubt that they did their best to please themselves, and to exhibit to their host and his friends the greatest triumphs of the gay art; but all their efforts only tended to bring into higher contrast their best and most intricate evolutions, their highest and most joyous humours, their pleasantest and merriest tricks, with the devil-daring, jumping, roaring, laughing, kissing, and hugging of the jolly gaberlunzie, who outran all competitors in the production of fun, as much as ever did an Arab steed the plough-nag at a fair gallop. There was not a knight among them that could, as the saying goeth, "hold the candle to him;" and as for the private opinions of the "damysells," the very best judges of the properties of man, they would not have given one hair in the beard of the jolly gaberlunzie for all the short crops of the chins of all the knights put together. His thefts and vagaries were lost, like spots on the sun, in the blaze of his convivial splendour; and, coming and flying off like a comet, as he had done, he had left them in a darkness which all the tiny lights of the

good-natured crew of bannerets could not illumine beyond the twinkle that only served to exhibit more clearly their gloom. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*—they might never see his like again.

The knights, after enjoying themselves in the manner we have mentioned, mounted their horses, (the one whose steed was stolen, having borrowed one from the farmer,) and having been supplied with a good stirrup-cup, galloped away, without ever having said one word, either of good or evil, of the mysterious gaberlunzie of whom they came in search. The Maiden was finished soon after, and the guidman of Cairnkibbie retired with his guidwife to rest, and in their waking moments to wonder at the strange events of the day. The fears of evil, resulting from his own conduct, had in a great measure ceased; but, alas! they ceased only to be revived in the morning, and increased to a degree that made him still lament having forced the king's messengers, and harboured a thief. About eleven o'clock of the succeeding day, a horseman, booted and spurred, arrived in great haste at the door of the farm-house of Cairnkibbie, and requested to see the guidman.

"What's your will, sir?" said the farmer to the messenger, as he went to the door.

"I bear his Highness the King's schedule, to be delivered to William Hume, the tenant of Cairnkibbie."

"The King's schedule!" answered William, as he took the paper out of the messenger's hands—"what hae I dune to offend the king?"

"Read it," said the messenger; and William complied.

"These are to show our high will and pleasor, that whereas ane gaberlunzie, of the name of Wat Wilson, or at least ane wandering vagabond to whom that denomination does by common use or courtesie effeir, did, in our guid toun of Dunse, on Wednesday last past, of this current

month of October, when our servitors and officers marching rank-on-raw, before and behint our person, reft frae the hands o' our mace-bearer, our mace of authority, fabricat of real siller, and embossed with dewysses of goold, wharwith he did flee trayterly to the protection and refuge of thee, William Hume, tenant of Cairnkibbie, wha, with thy tenants, domestics, and retainers, and others, did harbour him, even against our officers of justice, wham thou didst pummel, and lik, and abuse in a maist shameful manner, and thereafter didst confine in ane auld barn the whyle thou didst let off the said gaberlunzie, and steal ane o' the very choicest horses o' our knights; for all the whylk thou (and eke thy aiders and abettors) shalt answer at our present ambulatory Court, at our auld burgh of Dunse, wharto thou art summonit by this schedule, to attend on the day after thou receivest this, at 12 of the forenoon; whylk, if thou disregardest, thou shalt dree the punishment o' our righteous vengeance. Given at Dunse, this —— day of October 15—. JAMES R."

"The Lord hae mercy on the house o' Cairnkibbie!" ejaculated the farmer, as he read this fulmination of an incensed king's wrath. "What am I to do? How can I face the king after abusing his officers, and harbouring the thief wha stole the royal mace, as weel as the horse o' his officer? Can ye no intercede for me, sir, or at least gie me some advice how I am to act in this fearfu business?"

And the farmer stamped on the ground, and paced backwards and forwards in great distress. The officer who brought the schedule seemed to sympathise with the unhappy man; but, looking over to the door of the farm house, and seeing Lilly standing on the landing-place, combing her fair locks, he smiled as if some hope for the unfortunate farmer had broken in on his mind.

"Is that your daughter?" said he.

"It is," answered the farmer; "but that question has sma' concern with this present misery that has overtaken the house o' her father."

"More than thou thinkest, mayhap," answered the horseman. "Bring her with thee, man, to Court. The king cannot resist the appeal of beauty. If that fair wench will but hold up that face of hers, while thou settest forth thy defence, I'll guarantee thy liberation for a score o' placks. But see thou attendest; otherwise, messengers will be sent to force thy presence."

Saying these words, the messenger clapped spurs to his horse, and was out of sight in an instant, leaving the poor farmer in a state of unabated terror. He went into the house, and reported the direful issue of last night's adventure to his wife and daughter. The sympathetic communications of their mutual fears increased their sorrow and apprehension, till the females burst into tears, and the guidman himself groaned, at the prospect of his inevitable ruin. During the day and the night, the subject formed the continual theme of their conversation; and the terror of meeting the sovereign, the weakness of the defence, and the fear of ruinous consequences, alternated their influence over their clouded minds, without a moment's intermission of ease. The guidwife was determined she would not leave her husband in the hands of his enemies; Lilly agreed to accompany them, at the request of her father; and Will Carr, with one or two of the farm-servants, were to go as exculpatory witnesses. The farmer had in his grief resolved upon a candid defence. The truth, he was satisfied, might bring him off, while any attempt at concealment or falsification could not fail to hasten and increase the punishment he dreaded. At an early hour next day, the party were all on their way to Dunse; the farmer dressed in his long blue coat and blue bonnet, his wife with her manky kirtle and high-crowned mutch, bedizened with large

bows of red ribbons; and Lilly, with her "Lincolme gown" and wimple-bound hair, looking like the Queen of May herself. On their entry into the town of Dunse, they were met by two men having the appearance of officers, who claimed them in the king's name as criminals, and conducted them to a small castle at the end of the town, at that time used as a garrison for the king's troops. After passing through a long passage (their hearts palpitating with terror and awe), they came to a room of a large and stately appearance, hung round, as they could see by their side glances—for they were terrified to look up—with loose hangings of rich cloth, whereon were many curious figures, that seemed to stand out apart from that on which they were set forth. About the middle of the room—so far as they could guess by their oblique investigation—they were seated on a species of "lang settle;" and when they found themselves seated, they began (after drawing nearer and nearer to each other) to look up and around.

There was a considerable number of individuals in the hall, some standing and some sitting, and all dressed in the most gorgeous style. On an elevated seat, covered by a temporary canopy of velvet, sat the august monarch of Scotland, the Fifth James; and at his feet were three or four individuals in the habiliments of barons. All this was little suited to calming the beating hearts of the simple individuals who were so strangely situated. There was not (and the circumstance seemed strange) an ordinary individual present. Those who acted as officers were clearly knights, or high gentlemen in the confidence of the king. All was silence for a few minutes, when a loud voice called out the name of "William Hume."

"Here," answered William, with a choking voice, while his wife and daughter shook till their very clothes rustled.

"Stand up, sir," cried the same fearful voice again.

William obeyed; and now, unimaginable awe! the voice of Majesty itself sounded through the hall.

"Read the indictment, Dempster," said the King.

The indictment was accordingly read.

"Is it true, sir," began his Majesty, "that thou didst harbour this man called Wat Wilson, knowing him to have stolen our mace, and thereafter didst beat and confine our messengers who were sent to apprehend him?"

Like many other timid witnesses, William Hume regained his self-possession the moment he was fairly committed to giving evidence by a plain question being put to him.

"I cam here this day," replied William, looking up and around him with increasing confidence, "to tell your Highness God's truth. I canna deny the charge."

"Knowest thou the punishment of deforcing the king's messengers?" rejoined the King.

"No, yer Highness," replied William; "but my fears tell me it's no sma'."

"Hast thou anything to say in palliation of thy crime?"

"Owre muckle, I fear, yer Highness," answered William. "I say owre muckle; for now, when I look back upon the dementit proceedings o' that nicht, I have almost come to the conclusion that that gaberlunzie wha has brought me into a' this trouble, was neither mair nor less than his august Majesty wha"——

"Who, who?" cried the King impatiently; while several of the lords began to laugh, and whisper, "He knows him, he knows him."

"—Than his august Majesty," continued William, "wha haulds his court there—there"—(pointing his finger downwards.) "To be plain, yer Highness, I do on my saul believe he was the Deevil himsel!"

The king laughed a loud laugh, and all the barons burst fair out into a hearty "guffaw;" while some of them

muttered, "A compliment—a compliment, in good faith, to the King"—a whisper which, if William Hume had heard, he might have construed into a hint that the gaberlunzie was no other that the king himself; but, luckily for the naiveté of William's testimony, he remained in his ignorance.

"What, man!" exclaimed the King, when he had again arranged his jaws into something like gravity—"Dost thou believe he was the Devil?"

"Troth do I," replied William, now getting bolder by the laughter that had rung in his ears; "and the mair I think o' him and his wild and wonderfu' feiks and freits, the mair satisfied am I o't."

William's adherence to his position produced another burst of merriment.

"What *did* he do," continued the King, "to entitle him to that character? It would ill become us to punish a subject for the acts of the Evil One."

"What did he *no* do, your Highness?" ejaculated the farmer—"he did everything the enemy could do, and man couldna. We were hauldin our Maiden when he cam to the door, and were determined no to let him in; but he turned a' oor hearts in an instant, and the enemies o' his entrance becam the freends o' his presence. Then began he to act his part: he played as nae man ever played; drank as nae man ever drank; danced, and made ithers dance, langer and blyther than ever man did on the face o' this earth; caught men's hearts like bullfinches wi' his sangs, the women's by the rub o' his beard; and sent through a' and owre a' sic a glamour and witchery o' fun, and frolic, and enjoyment—ay, and luve o' himsel—that nae mortal cratur was ever seen to hae sic power since the days o' Adam."

William drew breath, and the king and lords again laughed heartily.

"But a' that was naething," continued William; "I'm a plain man, as ye may see—and wha, looking at me, would say that a mortal gaberlunzie could twist me round his finger as easily as he could do a packthread? Yet this beggar did that. Your Highness' troops cam to seize him—and wha before ever saw the guidman o' Cairnkibbie harbour a thief? The Deevil had thrown owre me and the hail menyie the charm o' his cantraps. We swore we would defend him—ay, even though we saw the stowen mace in his hand; we did defend him, and he had nae mair to do than to blaw in oor lugs, when clap went the barn-doors, and a' yer Highness' knights were imprisoned as if by magic. Could a beggar o' ordinar flesh and blude hae dune a' that, yer Highness?"

William again drew breath, and again the hall resounded with the laugh of the king and his lords.

"But even a' that was little or naething," continued William again; "for to pay us for a' the guid we had dune him, he made himsel invisible, and rode aff like a fire-flaught on ane o' the knight's horses; and frae that eventfu hour to this, we hae ne'er seen his face."

"Art satisfied, my Lord of Ross?" said the King in a whisper, to a lord that sat beside him. "Is our wager won? Have we, as we essayed, succeeded in our undertaking? Have we in the form of a beggar, so wrought upon the hearts of the members of a Maiden feast, as to gain their love to the extent of making them defend the gaberlunzie against the king's knights, inspiring them to fight, and win the day in a fought battle, and latterly riding home on one of the enemy's horses? Ha! ha! we opine we have—what say our judges?"

"The game is up," replied the Lord of Ross. "I acknowledge myself beat. Your Highness has won the day."

Another laugh sealed the triumph of the king, and

William Hume stared in amazement at the extraordinary mummery that was acted around him.

"William Hume," said the King, "this is an artifice on thy part to escape our vengeance. I go to put on the black cap, and to return to pronounce thy fate. Thou hast admitted the crime; and to lay it on the devil's back, is only the common way of the wicked."

Lilly, on hearing the mention of the black cap, screamed, the mother cried for mercy, and the thunderstruck farmer waited to receive his doom. The king went out, and returned in a short time in the cap of Wat Wilson, holding in his hand the stolen mace. A new light broke in upon the mind of the criminal—he perceived at once the identity of the king and the beggar; and the fears of all were in a moment dispelled.

"Stand up, Lilly Hume and Will Carr," said the monarch.

The voice of royalty sounded like a death-knell in the ears of the maiden. Her mind ran back to that eventful hour when she told the beggar the secret of her love; and she felt even yet the hug of the king, and the royal kiss burning on her lips. She blushed to the temples, and could scarcely stand without the support of her father, who now, when he saw how the land lay, had recovered all his fortitude, with a portion of well-founded hope that the services he performed to the beggar-king would meet with their reward.

"So your faither, Lilly, will not allow you to marry Will Carr," resumed James, "because he is puir?"

"Guid Lord!" muttered William to himsel—"hoo comes he to ken that too?—a family secret that I could scarcely breathe in my ain lug for its injustice, and now I see to be punished as it deserves."

Lilly hung her head. She could not open her lips. The mention of her humble love by a king and in the presence

of nobles, was so far beyond the ordinary experience of her obscure life, and held such a contrast to the secret breathings of her affection in her stolen meetings with her lover among the broom knowes of Cairnkibbie, that she thought the world itself was undergoing some extraordinary convulsion. Turning round, she caught the eye of Will Carr, who, having more courage, infused some portion of his confidence into the blushing girl.

"Is that true, William Hume?" rejoined James, who despaired of getting an answer from Lilly.

"'Deed, an' it's owre true, yer Highness," answered the farmer; "but I thought there wasna a mortal on earth knew the circumstance but mysel and my wife; for, begging your Highness' pardon, I was ashamed to tell it to the lassie hersel, for fear she might hae communicated it to Will's freends, wha are decent people, and canna help their poverty."

"Dost thou still stand to thy objection to the match?" again asked James.

"If your Royal Highness, as Wat Wilson," replied the farmer, smiling, "could command me and the hail household o' Cairnkibbie to do your bidding, and turn us round your finger like a piece o' packthread, I micht hae sma chance o' resistin yer authority as king o' Scotland. I hae nae objection noo to the match, seein that a king gies oot the bans."

"William Hume," resumed the laughing monarch, "hear thy doom. For the love thou didst extend and show to our royal person, we give thee a free grant of the lands of Cairnkibbie, upon this one condition—that thou consentest to the union of Lilly Hume with Will Carr, to whom we shall, out of our royal purse, give, as a marriage portion, two hundred marks."

"I canna disobey the command o' Wat Wilson," replied William with a dry smile. "He has already exercised

great authority owre us a', and we winna throw aff our allegiance in this eventfu day."

A general laugh wound up the scene. The young couple were married, and a merry wedding they had of it; but there was one great exception to the general joy, and that was, that although there was many a good dancer present, and Tam Lutar was not absent, there was not to be seen or heard the jolly beggar who had, on the former occasion, been the soul of the Maiden. James became afterwards engaged in more serious concerns, and there were few who knew anything of his nocturnal exploit. The Humes were told to keep it a secret; and the lords who were present had too much regard for their king to expose his good-humoured eccentricities. When Hume became proprietor of Cairnkibbie, the people speculated; but little did they know, so well had the secret been kept, that the grant proceeded from the farmer's supposed misfortune, or that Wat Wilson the beggar, who danced so jovially at the Maiden, was the individual who had transformed William Hume from a simple farmer to one of the small Border lairds who held their heads so high in those days; and far less was it known that the same individual had brought about the marriage of Lilly Hume and Will Carr.

Thus have we attempted to describe one of those wild frolics in which the young King James V. of Scotland occasionally indulged. If he had lived to an advanced age, his subjects might have had as much reason to admire the king as they had to love the royal gaberlunzie, who, wherever he took up his quarters, whether "in a house in Aberdeen," or in the barn of Cairnkibbie, sent the fire of his spirit of love and fun throughout all with which he came in contact.

# THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.

## EARLY RECOLLECTIONS OF A SON OF THE HILLS.

I HAVE oftentimes thought, what, I dare say, has been thought again and again by thousands before I was born, and will be thought by as many millions after I have ceased both to think and speak—I have thought that, if any one were to give an exact transcript of his feelings and experience, in early life in particular—without any connecting link even, beyond that of time and place—such a written record could not fail to be exceedingly interesting. The novelty of the scene; the uncloyed character of the feelings; the harpy-clutching nature of the imagination; the variety of sources within and without, from which pleasure is derived and is derivable—all these form a mine of delightful insight, which has not, perhaps, ever yet been exhausted—a mine conducting to, and losing itself in, that far-away central darkness which precedes perception, recollection, existence. I remember—and it is an awful remembrance—the death of my grandmother when I was only four years old. There she lies in that bed. Alongside of that sheet, there are my mother and the minister kneeling in prayer. The whisper is conveyed to the minister's ear—"Sir, she has win to *rest!*" Oh, that sweet word rest!—rest negative, rest positive—rest from, rest in, rest amidst a sea of troubles—rest in an ocean of glorious happiness! "Sir, she has win to rest!" I can never forget the words, nor the look, nor the place, nor the all which then constituted *me*. The minister pauses in the middle of a sentence, he rises from his knees, and, taking

my mother's hand in his, as well as mine in the other, he approaches the bed of death; but, O my soul, what an impression is made upon me! My grandmother — the figure with the short cloak over her shoulders, the check apron, the tobacco-box, and the short cutty-pipe—the speaking, conversing, kind-hearted figure—what is *it now?* Asleep!—but the eyes are open, and frightfully unmeaning. Asleep!—but the mouth is somewhat awry, and there is an expression unknown, intolerable, terrible, all over the countenance.

And this is death! I cannot stand it. I fly to the door —to the brae—to the hill. I dash my face, shoulders and all, into a bracken bush, and weep, weep, weep myself asleep. When I awake, it is a dream; I am amused with the white table-cloth, the bread and cheese, and wine bottle. I am amused with the plate, salt, and earth placed on the breast of the corpse. I am amused with the coffining; but, most of all—oh, delightful!—with the funeral—the well-dressed people—the numbers, the services of bun, shortbread, wine, and spirits; and above all, with various little bits and drops which fall to my share. I firmly believe I got fuddled on the occasion. Such is man; for men are but children of a larger growth. Now, there is only *one* event, circumstance, incident, firmly and fairly told—and it is interesting exceedingly: how interesting, then, would all the incidents and events of early life be, were they only narrated with equal faithfulness! So one may say; but, in so saying, they will be misled and mislead. There are few things which I remember so vividly as this. Death! I have seen thee since! Thou hast torn from me mother, brother, friend, and, above and beyond all, thou hast been betwixt these arms, murdering her whom my soul loved—the partner of my life—the mother of my babes—the balm of my soul—the glory, ornament, and boast of my existence; and yet, and yet my grandmother's

death is more vividly imprinted on brain and heart than any other event of a similar nature. Proof impressions sell dear! and proof feelings—oh, how deep are the lines, how indelible the engravings! They are cut on steel with a graving tool of adamant. The heart and the brain must be reduced to their elemental dust, ere these impressions can wear out—and yet I was only four years and six months old!

I saw it—ay, and I see it still—a poor innocent lamb. I had kissed it, and hung about its neck on the sunny brae. People said it was not thriving: I would not believe it. It was my companion. I often fed it with milk; put my finger into its little toothless mouth, and made it lap the invigorating and nourishing liquid. It had no parent, no friend, in a manner, but me, and I was only five years old, in petticoats; a very semblance of humanity; a thing to be strode over in his path by mankind of ordinary stature. But there came a blight, a curse, a dreadful change, over my dear and endearing pet. It was torn—ay, dreadfully torn, by some nightly dog. When I first found it, it was scarcely alive, lying bleeding; its white, and soft, and smooth skin dragged in the mud, torn and untouchable. There was a knife applied; but not to cure; it was to kill, to put out of pain. I could not stand it; I went into convulsions, screamed, and almost tore myself to pieces. "My lamb! my wee lambie! my dear, dear sweety!"—but it had passed, and I was alone in my existence. But, oh! it was a fearful lesson which I had learned—a dreadful truth which I had ascertained. Youth, as well as age, is subject to death: dreadful!

There she sits in loveliness—there, there, in the midst of that hazel bush, snug in her retreat, her yellow bill projecting over the brow of her nest: smooth, black, and glittering are her feathers, and her eye is the very balmy south of expression. Yet there is a watchfulness and a timidity

in her attitude and movement—she is not at ease, for that eye has caught mine, as they protrude upon her betwixt two separated branches; and, after two or three hesitating stirs, she is out—off—away; but perched on a neighbouring bough, to mark and watch my proceedings. And *he*, too, is there; *he*, her companion and helpmate; he who was singing, or rather whistling, so loud on that tall and overtopping birch; he who was making the setting sunlight glad with his music—who was, doubtless, chanting of courtship, and love, and union, and progeny. Yes! *he* has left his branch and his sun; he has dropped down from his elevation, to inquire into the cause of that sudden chuckle, by which his lady bird has alarmed him. There are four eyes upon me now, and all my proceedings are registered in two beating bosoms. But the nest is full—it is full of life—of young life—of the gorling in its hair, and incipient tail—of yellow gaping bills, all thrust upwards, and crying, as loud as attitude and cheep can do, "Give, give, give!" Surely Solomon had never seen a blackbird's nest with young, else he had given it a place amongst his "gives!" This was my first nest. It was discovered when I was only five years old; it was visited every day and every hour; the young ones grew apace; they feathered into blackness; they hopped from their abode; they flew, or were essaying to do so, when—O world! world! why, why, is it so with thee!—destruction came in a night, and the feathers of my young ones were strewed around their once happy and crowded abode. There had been other eyes upon them than mine. Yes! eyes to which the night is as noonday—vile, green, elongated eyes, and sharp, penetrating, and unsparing teeth, and claws, stretched, crooked, and clutching; and, in short, the cat had devoured the whole family!—not one was left to the distracted parents. I shall never, never forget their fluttering movements, their chirpings, their restlessness, their

ruffled feathers, and all but human speech. There was revenge in my young bosom—mad and terrible revenge. I snatched up the murderer—all unconscious as she was of her fault. I ran with her, like a fury, to a deep pool in the burn. I dashed her headlong into the waters—from which, of course, she readily escaped, and, eyeing me with a look of extreme surprise from the further bank, immediately vanished into the house. Though we were great friends before this event—and I would gladly have renewed our intercourse afterwards, when my passion had subsided—yet Pussy never forgave me, at least I know that she never trusted me, for I could never catch her again.

That's the pool—the very bumbling pool, where we bathed, and stood beneath the cascade, for a whole summer's day. There were more than one or two either—there were many of us; for we collected as the day advanced, and still those who were retreating, upon encountering those who were advancing, would turn with them again, and renew their immersions. It was summer—and such summer as youth (for I was only six) alone can experience—it was one long blaze of noontide radiance. The sun stationary, as in the valley of Jehosophat; the trees, green, leafy, shady, rejoicing; the very cattle dancing in upon the cooling element; and the grasshopper still dumb. The heat was intense, yet not overpowering; for we were naked—naked as were Adam and Eve prior to sin and shame—naked as is Apollo Belvidere, or the Venus dè Medicis. We were Nature's children, and she was kind to us; she gave us air that was balm; sunbeams that wooed us from the pool; and water again that enticed us from the open air! What a day it was of fun and frolic, and splash, and squatter, and confusion! Now jumping from the brow into the deep; now standing beneath the Grey Mare's Tail, the flashing cascade; now laving—like Diana on Actæon—the water from the pool on each other's limbs and faces;

now circling along the green bank, in sportive chase and mimic fray, and again couching neck deep in the pool. But the awful dinnle is on the breeze; the black south hath advanced rapidly upon meridian day; the white and swollen clouds have boiled up into spongy foam; and there runs a light blue vapour over the inky cloud beneath. Hist!—whisht!—it's *thunner!* and, ere many minutes have escaped, we are each quaking every limb at our own fire-sides.

Many recent winters have made me cry, What has become of winter? I wished Government would fit out an expedition to go in quest of him. He must have been couching somewhere, the funny old rogue, behind the Pole; he must have been coquetting with the beauties of Greenland or Nova Zembla. He has, last season, condescended to give us a glimpse of his icy beard and hoary temples. Oh, I like the old fellow dearly!—but it is the old fellow only. As to him of modern times, I know not what to make of him—a blustering, blubbering, braggadocio; making darkness his pavilion, for no other purpose than to throw pailfuls of water on the heads of women and children; letting out his colds and influenzas from his Baltic bags, and terrifying our citizens with "auld wives," broken slates, and shivered tiles. But my winter of 1794—what a delightful companion he was! He did his work genteelly; his drift was a matter of a few hours; but they were hours of vigorous and terrible exertion. Some ten score of sheep, and some twenty shepherds, perished within a limited range, in one wild and outrageous night. It was, indeed, sublime—even to me, a youth of eight years of age, it was fearfully sublime. Can anything be more beautiful than falling and newly-fallen snow. *There* you see it above, and to a great height, shaping into varied and convolving forms. It nears, it nears, it nears, and lights in your little hand, a feathery diamond, a crystallized vapour, an evanes-

cent loveliness! But the tempest has sounded an assail, and the broadened flakes are comminuted into blinding drift —the earth beneath blows up to heaven, whilst the heaven thunders its vengeance upon the earth. The restless snow whirls, eddies, rises, disperses, accumulates. Man cannot breathe in the thick and toiling atmosphere. The wreaths swell into rounded and polished forms, and, on a sudden, disappear. The air has cleared, has stilled, and the sharp and consolidating frost has commenced. What a sea of celestial brightness! The earth wrapped in an alabaster mantle, the folds of which are the folds of beauty and enchantment. Days of glory, and nights of splendour. The moon, in her own blue heaven, contracted to a small circumference of clear, gaseous light; the hills, the hollows, the valleys, the muirs, the mosses, the woodlands, the rocky eminences, the houses, the churchyards, the gardens, the whole of external nature beneath her, giving up again into the biting and twinkling air an arrowy radiance of far-spread light. Here and there the course of a mountain torrent, or of a winding river, marked with a jagged and broken line of black. The bay of the house-dog heard far off—the sound of the curlers' sport, composed of a mixture of moanings—the "sweep," the "guard," the "stroke," the homebred and hearty shout and guffaw—the Babel mixture of noises, coming softened and attuned from the distant pond. It is the "how-dum-dead" of winter. Christmas has passed, with its happiness wished and enjoyed—it is the last night of the year; long and fondly-expected Hogmanay! We are abroad, amongst the farm-houses and cottars' huts—we pass nothing that emits smoke. Our disguises are fearful, even to ourselves, as we encounter each other unexpectedly at corners. Cakes, cheese, and all manner of eatables are ours, even to profusion. And who would not endure much of life, to have such exquisite fun renewed!

But my first trout!—killed—fairly landed out of the water—dancing about in all its speckled beauty on the green bank: this was indeed an event—this was an achievement of no ordinary interest. Fishing! to thee I owe more of exquisite enjoyment than to any other amusement whatever. I am a mountain child—born, and nursed, and trotted about from my cradle on the winding banks of a bonny burn, through whose waters there looked up eyes, and there waved fins and tails. I have taken, again and again, in after life, the wings of the morning, and have made my dwelling with the stunted thorn, the corbie nest, the croaking raven, the willie-wagtail, and the plover, and the snipe, and the lapwing. I have seen mist—glorious mist!—in all its fantastic shapes, and openings and closings, from the dense crawling blanket of wet to the bright, sun-penetrated, rent, and dispersing tatterment of haze. I have studied all manner of cloud, from the swollen, puffed up, and rolling castellation, to the smooth, level, and wide-spread overshadowing. The breezes have been my companions all along. I could scan their merits and demerits with a fisher's eye, from the rough and sudden puff, urging the pool into ridges of ripple, to the steady, soft, and balmy breath that merely brought the surface into a slight commotion. Burns, too, I have studied, and streams, and gullets, and weils, and clay-brows, and bumbling pools. I have fished in the Caple with Willie Herdman. (See Blackwood, volume sixth.) I have fished in the Turrit with Stoddart. (See his admirable book on Angling.) But the true happiness of a fisher is solitude. Oh, for a fine morning in April, fresh, breezy, and dark!—a mountain glen, through which the Dar or the Brawn threads its mazy descent; the bottom clear, and purified by a recent flood; the waters not yet completely subsided—something betwixt clear and muddy—a light blue, and a still lighter brown.

Not a shepherd, nor a sheep, nor a living creature within sight—nothing but the sound of the passing stream, and the plash of the hooked and landing trout. A whole immensity of unexhausted stream unfurled before me; the day yet in its nonage; my pockets stuffed with stomach store; my mind at ease; my tongue ever and anon repeating, audibly—"Now for it, this will do, there he has it, this way, sir, this way; nay, no tricks upon travellers—out, out you *must* come—so, so, my pretty fellow, take it gently, take it gently!" But I am forgetting my first trout in the thousand and tens of thousands which have succeeded it. I had a knife—I know not how I got it; perhaps I bought it at a Thornhill fair, with a sixpence which the guidman of Auchincairn gave me as my fairing, or perhaps—but no matter; as Wordsworth would say, "I had a knife!" and this knife was my humble servant in all manner of duties; it was, in fact, my slave; it would cut bourtree, and fashion scout guns; it would make saugh whistles; it would fashion bows and arrows; it would pare cheese, and open hazel nuts; it was more generally useful than Hudibras' sword—and I felt its value. In fact, what was I without my knife? A soldier without his gun, a fiddler without his fiddle, a tailor without his shears. And yet this very knife, dear and useful as it was to me, I parted with—I gave it away, I fairly bartered it for a bait-hook with a horse-hair line attached to it. But then I had seen, and seen it for the first time, a trout caught with this very hook and line. Having a hook and line, I cut myself, from an adjoining wood, a rowan-tree fishing-rod, which might serve a double purpose, protecting me from the witches, and aiding me in catching trout. Away I went, "owre muirs and mosses mony o'," to the glorious Caple, of which I had heard much. I baited my hook with some difficulty; for worms, whatever boys may be, are not fond of *the sport*. I stood alongside of the deep

black pool. I saw the deception alight in the water, and heard the plump; it sank, and sank, by a certain law, which philosophers have named gravitation; it became first pale-white, then yellow, then almost red, as it sank away into the dark profundity of mossy water. It lay still and motionless for a few instants. At last it moved; ye powers! it cuts the water like an edged instrument—it pulls—pulls strongly. The top of the rod touches the surface of the pool—something must be done—I am all trepidation. But, by mere strength of pulling and of tackle, a large yellow-wamed, black-backed fellow lies panting on the sand bank at the foot of the pool.

"And its hame, hame, hame,
Fain wad I be;
And it's hame, hame, hame,
To my ain mammie!"

I ran home with all possible rapidity; and displayed, on a very large pewter plate, my first trout, to my kind and affectionate parent. My happiness was completed.

The woods!—I was born in the woods; man lives originally in the primeval forests, with the exception, perhaps, of the Arab, the Babylonian, and Egyptian; wherever there was sufficient soil and suitable climate, there was wood, from Lapland to Capetown, from the Bay of Biscay to the Yellow Sea. The American forests still exist, where even the axe of European civilization has not reached them. There woods are natural to man; he turns to them as to something, he cannot well tell how or why, congenial to his nature. At least so I have felt it, and feel it still in my recollections of early life. Plantations are stiff and artificial, generally consisting of a dense field of regular similarity; but natural wood, the offspring of our own soil, the indigenous plants of Scotland—the birch, for example, with its bending and elegant twigs, its white stem, and grateful fragrance; the eternal oak, with its

leafy shade; the tough ash, with its pointed leaf; the lowly hazel, with its straight stems and fragrant nuts; the saugh, the willow, the thorn-sloe, the haw, the elder, the bourtree, the crabtree, the briar, and the bramble—all these consociate lovingly, and actually did consociate around, and almost over, the humble but snug cot where I first drew breath. There, my first herald of day was the song of the linnet, thrush, or blackbird; there, my first efforts were made in gaining the top of some little ash or birch; there, my first riches consisted in a few pints of ripened and browned nuts, kept in the leg of a footless stocking, against the ensuing Halloween. But Halloween has now become a mere name—*et preterea nihil*, still *stat nominis umbra*, sufficient to make me recollect with delight the exquisite pleasure which I enjoyed in anticipating as well as in observing this festival. The crabtree yielded its reddest and ripest fruit for the occasion; a casual apple was hooked over the hedge of the castle orchard for the same purpose; but, above and beyond all, nuts were gathered, dried and stored away into sly corners and out-of-the-way places. What amusement so delightful as nut-gathering! There they hang to the afternoon sun, brown and ready to escape from their husks or shells. There are twosome clusters, and threesome clusters; and if you could reach without shaking that topmost branch (but there is the difficulty and the danger), you may even secure a twelvesome cluster—a glorious knot of lovely associates, that would crumble from their abodes into your hands like dried leaves! You pass on from bush to bush; but you have been anticipated. Will or Tam, or Jock or Jamie, or all four, have been there before you, and have left you nothing but a scanty gleaning. Here and there, you are enabled to extract from the centre of a leafy shade, an ill-ripened, because an unsound, single nut, which serves no better purpose than to break

your jaws with its emptiness, in cracking it. But you push away into the interior—the *terra incognita* of the woodland; and, standing out by itself, aired and sunned all over, you find a little branch of scroggs, stinted and ill-leaved, but really covered all over with the most exquisite fruitage. Long, large, are the nuts you have thus acquired; and you chuckle inwardly, as you contemplate a prize which has been reserved for your exclusive use. With what despatch are cluster after cluster accumulated into handfuls, and then again into pocketfuls, and then, at last, into cap, hat, or bonnetfuls, till you become a kind of shellicoat, a walking *nuttery*, a thing of husks and kernels! The voice of your companions is loud and frequent, in the language of inquiry into the state of your success; but you preserve a deep silence, or answer prevaricatingly, by, "you have got a few—not many—very bad place this," &c. &c. At last you come upon them with the astonishment of display, and expose your treasure with ineffable feelings of triumph. You have distanced them all. Your Halloween fortune is made—you are a happy being.

But Halloween comes at last—Scotland's Halloween—Burns' Halloween—the Halloween of centuries upon centuries—of the Celt amidst his mountains, the Saxon in his valley, the Druid in his woods, King James the First in his palace—and old Janet Smith in her humble cottage. It was at Janet Smith's that I held the first Halloween of which I have any distinct recollection. There was a kind of couthiness about old Janet, which made her hearth the resort of all the young lads and lasses, boys and girls, around. On Halloween, Janet had on her best head-gear, her check apron, and clean neck napkin.

We had such burning of nuts, such pu'ing of stocks, such singing of songs, such gibing, laughing, cracking, tale-telling, and, to crown all, such a gallant bowl of punch,

made from a sonsy greybeard, which the young men had taken care to store previously with the needful, that I went home half crazy, and, my mother affirmed, continued so for several days to come.

Ye gods! what superstitious notions peopled my brain ever since! I recollect such fears about the invisible world becoming visible—I walked amidst a multitude of unseen terrors, ever ready to burst the casement of immateriality, and to stand, naked, confessed, in material semblance, before me. There was the fairy, the inhabitant of the green unploughed knowe, the green-coated imp, intent on child-stealing, or rather barter, and jingling her bridle through the high air on Halloween; there was the ghost, awful, solemn, and admonishing, pointing with the finger to buried treasure or murder glen; there was the wraith, little less terrible, and clothed in a well-known presence, prognosticating death or sore affliction; there was the death-watch, distinctly heard tick, ticking, all night long, in the bed-post; there were the blue lights seen in round spots on the bed-head, on the very night when three lads and three lasses perished in the boat; there was the muckle deil himself, driving in a post-chaise, over the "chaise-craig," or panting, like a bull-dog, at the nightly traveller's feet; and, over and above all these, was "Will o' the Wisp," skipping about from one side of the moss to the other, and always placing itself betwixt you and your home.

"D'ye see that?" said my cousin, Nelly Laurie, a girl of eighteen, to me, when my years could be reckoned by the number of the muses.

"What! what is it!" I exclaimed; and my attention was directed towards a moss, or morass, through which our footpath lay, on our way home, about ten o'clock of a dark, damp, and cloudy night.

"There! there it's again!"

There is something in the word "it" most indefinitely

terrific. Had she said *he* or *she*, or even that ghost, or that wraith, or that bogle, it would not have been half so startling; but "it"—do you see it?—see a thing without a name, a definition—a mere object, shorn of its accidents or qualities! This is indeed most awful. With fear and trembling, I lifted up mine eyes, and beheld—O mercy, mercy!—a light in the middle of the moss, where no light should have been; and it was floating and playing about, blue as indigo, and making the darkness around it visible. My joints relaxed, and I fell to the earth, incapable of motion. I was a mere bundle of loose and unconnected bones, sinews, and muscles. My cousin stood over me, incapable of deciding what would be done; at last, it was discovered that to advance homewards was better than to retrograde, as we were already more than half-way on our course. I was instructed to repeat, and to continue repeating, aloud, the Lord's prayer; whilst she, on whose shoulders I lay like a dead sheep, continued to give audible note to the tune of the twenty-third psalm. It was, indeed, an odd concert for the devil, or his emissary, Mr. William yclept "of the Wisp," to listen to; for, whilst I was roaring out, in perfect desperation, "Our Father which art in Heaven," she was articulating, in a clear and overpowering tone, "The Lord's my shepherd;" whilst I slipt into "Hallowed be thy name," she advanced with, "I'll not want—he makes me down to lie!"—and, sure enough, down *both of us lay*, with a vengeance, in the midst of a moss-hole, into which, from terror and the darkness of the night, we had inadvertently plunged. "What's the meaning of all this, sirs!" exclaimed a well-known voice. It was my mother's, God bless her! I clung to her like grim death, and never quitted my hold till I was snugly lodged above the fire, near to the lamp, and with dog, cat, my cousin, and my mother, betwixt me and the dark door-way passage! I did not get a sound sleep for months and years

afterwards! Such are thy miseries, unhallowed, unmanly superstition! Disease may relax the body and enervate the whole frame; but thou art the disease of the soul, the fever of the brain. Misfortunes may be borne—pain must be endured till it is cured—but superstition such as *this*, is neither endurable nor curable. I am not yet completely cured of it, now that I have entered my sixtieth year. Were you to send me into an empty, dark church, at midnight, and through a surrounding churchyard, peopled with the bodies of the dead, I durst not go, though you gave me large sums of money. And is my judgment or reason in fault? Not at all; it is my feelings, my moral nature; my very blood has got such a blue tinge that I verily believe it would look like the blue ink I am writing with, were it caught in a tea-cup! Sir Walter Scott was bit, too, and so are nine-tenths of the *living*, though they won't allow it. It has now become, like latent heat, an unseen agency; but it still acts, and powerfully, on civilized, and even learned man!

Seeking of birds' nests is a glorious amusement, and the knowledge of a large amount of these is a possession to be boasted of. I know of a linnet's nest, says one—and I of a robin's, says another—I of shilfa's, says a third; but a fourth party comes in with his mavis, and all competition is at an end. The mavis is indeed a Scottish nightingale; he sings so mellow, and so varied—his brown spreckled breast turned up to the rising or the setting sun, he pours o'er the woodland a whole concert of harmony; and then he awakens into competition the blackbird, with his Æolian whistle; the green and grey linnet, with their sharp and sweet tweedle-twee; the goldfinch, with his scarlet hood and song of flame; and the lark on the far-off fell, with his minstrelsy of heaven's border. But what to a boy, a boy of eight or nine, is all this song and sunshine, in comparison with the fact—"I know of five birds' nests!"

Why, this annunciation is enough to settle your doom—you may almost apprehend assassination, so much must you be envied. But true it is, and of verity; I once knew five birds' nests—all containing eggs or young. Oh, I remember them as it were only of yesterday. Time has only engraved, with a tool of adamant, the impression deeper and deeper. There was the snug and pendulous abode of the little kitty-wren. It was beneath the brow of the burn, covered over from winds and rains by the incumbent bank and brushwood. It was a plum-pudding, with a hole made by your thumb on one side; a stationary football, composed of all things soft and comfortable, covered on the outside with fog or moss, and in the inside lined with the down of feathers; and there were from sixteen to twenty little blue *peas* in it; and the little hen sat on them daily, and opposed her little bill vigorously to my intrusive finger. She was not afraid—not she! she fought manfully, "*pro aris et focis*;" if not, as the Romans say, "*manibus pedibusque*;" nor, as the savage Saxons say, "tooth and nail," nor, as the shepherd of Ettrick says, "knees and elbows an' a',"—still she fought with the instruments with which nature had endowed her, with her bill and her little claws, and she fought it most vigorously. O Nature! thou art a fearful mystery of wisdom—thou makest the meekest and most timid natures bold as lions when their progeny are concerned. Look at the hen—poor chucky, that scrapes her pittance from the doorway or dunghill, whom the veriest whelp which can bark and tumble over will scare into wing and screech—put the hen on eggs, give her an infant brood, show her danger from dog, man, bear, or lion—who's afraid? Not she at least; she will dance on the nose of the mastiff, she will fly in the face of humanity, whether in the shape of man, woman, boy, or child. The warrior looks fierce in his regimentals and armour; but what cares she for guns, bayonets, swords, and pistols? Not a peppercorn!

Her young ones are behind her, and she will meet the armed monster, with foot, bill, wing, and with a fearful intonation of terrifying sounds. No Highland regiment, even at Prestonpans, ever set up a more alarming battle shout.. She is never conquered—like Achilles, she is "invincible;" but so soon as her progeny need no more her care or her protection—so soon as they have been pecked into estrangement, and sent to scrape and provide for themselves—she resumes all her mild and feminine qualities—she is plain "chucky" again! The linnet's nest is covered with scales of a silky whiteness—the fine thin *laminæ* which cover the bark of the oak, of that very tree in the cleft of whose branches her nursery is fixed. Inside of this little nicely-proportioned cup, there are five beautifully-spotted eggs—a white ground with a grey spot, flung over the whole shell with a most charming regularity. And there is a nest in that stone wall which surrounds the plantation—it is that of the stone-chatter—filthy, unsonsy bird, fit companion for the yellow yeldring, which conceals her treasure 'neath a tuft of grass on the bent, and is trodden under foot. They are both deserving of all detestation; the one for drinking every May morning of the devil's-blood, and the other for many an impertinent jest and chatter. Let them perish in one day—let their eggs be blown, and hung up as ornaments in strings along the brow of the household looking-glass, or smashed to atoms by the stroke of an urchin previously blinded.

"For he ne'er would be true, she averred,
That would rob a poor bird."

It was whilst engaged in robbery of this kind, that I was first checked by the tears and entreaties of Mary—of my dear cousin, Mary Morison. Alas! poor Mary! thou wast mild, beautiful, kind, merciful; yet thy days have been numbered, and thou art gone—

"Unde negant redire quemquam;"

and I, a lubber fiend in comparison with thy beauty and gentleness—I, a personification of cruelty and horror in comparison with thee—I am still alive, and thinking of thee—whilst thou art not even *dust*—"*etiam periere ruinæ.*" Forty-five years confound even dust, and reduce to a fearful nonentity all that smiled, and charmed, and inspired. But of this enough—this way madness lies.

That was a terrible conflagration at Miramichi. I think I hear it crashing, thundering, crackling on; before it the wild beasts, the serpents, the cattle—man! poor, houseless, helpless, smoke-enveloped, and perishing man. The reason why I can conceive so vividly of this awful and comparatively recent visitation is this—I was accustomed to "set muirburn" when a boy of nine or ten. The primeval heath of our mountains was strong, bushy; and, when dry in spring, exceedingly inflammable. I was a mountain child; for, on one side of my dwelling the heather withered and bloomed up to the door; and when one thinks of the "bonny blooming heather," it is quite refreshing; it blooms when all things around it are withering, during the later months of harvest; but then, oh, then, it puts on such a russet robe of beauty—a dark evening cloud tipped and tinged with red—a mantle of black velvet spangled with gold; and its fragrance is honey steeped in myrrh. Yet when withered in March and April, it is an object of aversion to the sheep farmer, who prefers green grass and tender sward; and he issues to impatient boyhood the sentence of destruction. Peat follows peat, kindled at one end, and held by the other; the hillside or the level muir swarm with matches; carefully is the ignition communicated to the dry and widespread heath; from spot to spot—in lines and in circles—it extends and unites—the wind is up, and one continuous blaze is the almost immediate consequence. It is night, dark night—the clouds above catch and reflect the uncertain gleam. The heath-

fowl wing their terrified flight—through, above, and beneath the rolling and outspreading smoke. The flame gathers into a point; and, at the more advanced part of the curvature, the force and blaze is terrible. A thousand tongues of fire shoot up into the density, and immediately disappear. Who now so venturous as to dash headlong through the hottest flame, and to recover from beneath the choking night his former position? There goes—a hat—a cap—a bonnet! They have taken up their position in the pathway of the devouring flood of fire—and who so brave, so daring, as to extricate his own property from instant destruction? Hurrah! hurrah! from a score of throats, mixes with the thunder, the crackle, the roll—all is power, novelty, ecstasy; bare heads and bare feet dance and show conspicuously upon the still smoking turf. Here an adder is seen writhing and twisting in the agonies of death. There a half-burned hat evinces the fun and the folly of its owner. But, oh, horrible! what is that on the edge of vision, in the dim and hazy distance; it comes forward, bounding, turning, and bellowing, fearful and paralysing; it is the bull himself escaped from his fold, and maddened by the smoke and blazing atmosphere. He comes down upon the charge, tail erect, and head down, tossing all that is solid under his feet, and looking through the scattered earth with eyes glaring as well as reflecting fire. Achilles, Hector, Agamemnon, Wallace, Wellington, never entered a field of battle with such a terrific presence. He seems as if he had just escaped from a Roman or Spanish arena. He is desperately infuriated; and woe be to him who shall be overtaken by this muscular tornado in his weakness and his fears! We are off! *diffugimus!* We are nowhere to be found. One has made for a distant wall surrounding the heather park, and is in the act of climbing it. The bull is in full chase, armed with two short but powerful horns. The fugitive

has just laid hold of an upper stone to assist his ascent; but the faithless help has given way; stone and he are lying alongside of the dyke. The bull is in full scent. The noise has directed him. He nears—he nears—he nears! My God! the urchin's life is not worth two minutes' purchase.

"Now, do thy speedy, Arnot Wull—
'Twill take it all to clear the bull!"

Bravo! the summit is gained; the feet of the pursued are seen flying in mid air; he has sprung from the summit at least twenty feet; but the whole weight of the pursuing brute is upon the crazy structure; it gives way with a crash, and down rush stones over stones, and the poor maimed, bruised brute over all. What! Mr. Bull! are you satisfied?—why not continue the sport? But the game is up; Will has regained his mother's dwelling, and now lives to record this wonderful, this all but miraculous escape. Catch me setting muirburn again!

I was very unwilling, at the age of nine, to be sent to school—I had formed for myself a home society with which I was perfectly satisfied; but the decree had gone forth, and to school I must go, to learn Latin, conducted by a scholar of some standing. I had three miles to walk, but I would have wished them ten. Shakspeare shows the characters with whom time gallops, and, amongst others, with a thief who is to be hanged on a certain day—he might have mentioned a schoolboy, with shiny morning face, going unwillingly to school. When I came within sight of the large, many-windowed building, my heart beat sorely with alarm. All was new to me—the boys, the masters, the house, the grounds around it; in fact, I was about to pass into a new state of being. I was bursting the shell, and coming forth into real life. Hitherto I had seen nobody but the herd-callan, the Gibson family, my mother and *her* aunts. I was exceeding smart and mischievous, no doubt·

but my sphere of operations was confined; now it was about to be enlarged—I must face three hundred boys and girls in the park or school play-ground of Wallacehall. All eyes would be turned upon me; my very dress would undergo a scrutiny; nor would I easily escape the seasoning welcome, a hearty drubbing: all this I anticipated, and all this and more I soon experienced. When I set up my face in the play-ground about half-past eight (nine being the school hour), all was commotion. Alas! how many are now motionless who were then active—*still*, who were then vociferous—*cold*, whose hearts were then beating warm and buoyant! When the disk of my countenance appeared at the entrance into the park or play-ground, I was immediately smoked. One fellow came up with the most affected good-nature, and hoped my *mither* was with me. I would be in great danger, he said, without her. A second one bid me tie my shoe, and, whilst I was stooping, hauled me heels over head. I had not fairly recovered my natural position, when I was hit on the side of my head with a ball, till my eyes glanced fire; anon, the drive, the crowd, the scramble carried me along with it completely off my feet. I was pelted, bruised, buffeted, and even kicked. Human nature could stand it no longer—my spirit, even that of the Devil, was awakened within me—I struck out around me with all my might, and at random—somebody's nose happened to come in the way of my knuckles, and it bled; he struck back again, and the blood sprang from my lips. A ring was formed—to it we went—I, running in upon him head and shoulders, "knees and elbows an' a'," laid him flat; unfair play was proclaimed—my antagonist was raised; but he was pale and breathless; he said he was *hearted*, and had almost fainted; so I got a cheap victory, and eternal glory! I took my place amongst the boys, unmolested and respected in future. I would twaddle through a pretty decent volume, about public and private

education, and everybody but my bookseller would think I was speaking sense; but I will spare my reader and myself, and only add, in one sentence, that a public seminary, well conducted, is the best of all schools *for the world*—preparation for the buffetings, kickings, and jostlings of life.

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## THE SUICIDE'S GRAVE.

THE suicide's grave—where is it? It is at the meeting or crossing of three public roads; the body has been thrust down, under the darkness of night, into a coffinless grave. The breast, formerly torn and lacerated by passions, has lately been mangled into horrid deformity by the pointed stake; and the traveller, as he walks, rides, or drives along, regards the spot with an eye of suspicion, and blesses his stars that he is a living man. The suicide's grave—where is it? On the bare and cold top of that mountain which divides Lanark from Dumfriesshire. There you may see congregated the hoody craw, and the grey gled, and the eagle—but they are not congregated in peace and in friendship; they are fearful rivals, and terrible notes do they utter as they contend over the body of her who was fair, and innocent, and happy. Alas, for Alice Lorimer! Her story is a sad one, and it would require the pen of a Sterne or a Wilson to do it justice. But the circumstances are of themselves so full of mournful interest, that, even though stated in the most simple language, they cannot fail, I should think, to interest—nay, I will say it at once, to excite sympathy and pity; for why should we not pity the unhappy and unfortunate? They are pitied in poverty, in obscurity, in sickness, in death. Why should not we even pity the guilty and abandoned? They are pitied in prison, on the day of trial, and most of all, in the hour of

execution. There—even there—on that platform, the murderer himself obtains that sympathy which we refuse to the suicide. He who has only ruined, destroyed himself, is held in greater abhorrence than the man who has ruined innocence, and even murdered the unhappy mother and unborn babe. Away with such unjust and ungenerous distinctions! Away, and to the highway and to the mountain top, and to the raven, and the falcon, and the eagle, with the seducer and the murderer; and let the poor suicide's grave, in future, be in consecrated ground, where remembrance may soon overlook his woes and his very existence. Let him sleep unknowing and unknown in the churchyard of his fathers. Alice Lorimer, I myself knew —I was intimately acquainted with her—I was a companion and a favourite. In frosty weather we have frequented the same slides, and, when Alice was in danger of falling, I have caught her in my arms; we have hopped together for hours, playing at beds, and I even made Alice privy to all my birds' nests. Hers was indeed a playful, but a gentle nature. Her heart was light, her voice clear and cheerful, and her whole affections were engrossed by an only surviving parent, a widowed father. Alice was his first-born and his last. Her mother had given her life at the expense of her own; and her father, a shoemaker in the village of Croalchapel, devoted his whole spare time to the education of Alice. Often have I seen him, with the shoe on the last, and the elshun in his hand, pursuing his daily labours; but listening attentively all the while to Aly's readings. It was thus the child was taught to read the Bible, to say her prayers, and ultimately to make her father's dinner and her own. Their cottage stood at what was termed the "*head* of the town," on a sunny eminence looking to the west; behind it were the shade and the shelter of many trees, of the widespread oak, the tall ash, and the sweetly-scented birch. On Sabbath afternoons,

John Lorimer might be seen with his beloved child, clean and neatly dressed, ascending to the top of the Bormoors braes; and, from the green summit of the eminence, looking abroad over a landscape, certainly not surpassed by any which has yet come under the writer's observation. On his one hand lay the worn and silver-clasped Bible, from which portions of the gospels were occasionally read, and on the other reposed Poodle, a little wire-haired dog of uncommon natural parts, which had been greatly improved by education. Poodle could bark, and do all manner of things. His eyes would "glisten in friendship, or beam in reply." His nose was a platform, from which many little pieces of bread had been tossed up into the air, and afterwards snapped. He was all obedience to little Alice in particular; and, at her bidding, would do anything but swim—he had, somehow or other, contracted an aversion for the water, probably referable to some mischievous boys having one day thrown him into Closeburn Loch.

Alice and I went to school together. Her father's cottage lay directly in my way, and I called daily for the sweet girl. The other boys laughed at me, and made a fool of me, and asked me if I had seen Alice this morning. I could not stand this; for I reverenced the little innocent lamb—so I hit the Mr. Impertinence a blow in the stomach, which sent him reeling over several benches. I was no more taunted about Alice Lorimer. There were a number of older and less feminine girls at the school at this time. At play-hours these congregated by themselves behind the school, whilst the boys occupied the play-ground in front. Alice was one day severely handled by a neighbour's daughter, who had fixed a quarrel on her, and then beat her severely, calling her all manner of names, and, amongst others, honouring her with my own. I found the poor child—for I was a few years older—in tears, as we met in the Castle-wood on our way home. It was with difficulty

that I drew, bit by bit, the whole truth from her; and I resolved to punish, in one way or other, the rude and ill-hearted aggressor in this matter. I could not think of punishing her myself; but I got Jean Watson, the servant-maid of the factor's clerk—a kind of haverel, who sometimes threw me an apple over the hedge in passing—I got her to catch the culprit after dark, and to chastise her in her own way. I know not how it was effected, but it produced loud screams, and much merriment to me; for I was lying all the while *perdu* on the other side of the hedge. Tibby Murdoch was a most revengeful person—quite the antipodes to sweet Alice Lorimer. She was the daughter of a quarryman, who had come, only a few years before, to reside in the place, and work at the Laird of Closeburn's lime-works. How difficult it is for poor blind mortals to see the consequences of their actions! Had I then fully perceived what this act of retaliation was to lead to—what dismal consequences were to follow—I would rather have sunk at once into perdition than have been concerned in the affair. Tibby Murdoch's father was a brutal and a passionate man; and, understanding from his daughter how matters stood, and that poor Alice Lorimer had been the cause of his daughter's disaster, he left his work at midday, and, taking a horse-whip in his hand, entered the shoemaker's shop, and not finding Alice, without more ado, he proceeded to apply it to John Lorimer's shoulders. John Lorimer was a little, but a strong and well-made man, and, though the other was tall, bull-headed, and extremely athletic, John immediately threw aside his instruments of labour, which he felt it was dangerous to use on the occasion, and closed at once with the enemy. The struggle was severe; but John Lorimer, having got a hold of Murdoch about the middle, fairly lifted him off his feet, and dashed him down on the floor. Murdoch's strength, however, was superior to John's; and he contrived to roll over

upon his enemy, and at last to thrust his head immediately under a grate, which stood in a corner of the shop, containing live coals for melting some rosin which was about to be used. The crucible, with the melted and boiling rosin was upturned; and, unfortunately, the whole contents were spread over John Lorimer's face. He was dreadfully burned; but, what was worst of all, he lost the sight of one eye by the accident, and was very materially injured in the other. On an investigation by the proper authorities, Murdoch was convicted of the assault, and imprisoned for twelve calendar months. During his imprisonment, revenge upon poor Lorimer was his constant theme; and, when the time expired, he removed to the parish of Keir, and found employment in a lime-work belonging to Dr. Hunter of Barjarg. He was still, unfortunately, within an hour's walk of Croalchapel, and lay, like a cat in a corner, watching his prey. In the meantime, John Lorimer, though greatly deformed in his countenance, recovered the use of one eye, and pursued his quiet and useful labour as formerly. As his daughter Alice advanced in years, she grew in loveliness and virtue. At twelve years of age she became her father's housekeeper; and conducted herself in that capacity with surprising sense and prudence. It was at this time that I left school for college; and I spent the last night with Alice Lorimer. I was then a lad of sixteen, and she, as I have said, was twelve. What had I to do in the Castle-wood, by moonlight, and late after her father had gone to rest, with Alice Lorimer! Gentle reader, have a little patience, and exercise a little Christian charity, and, upon my honour, I will tell you all! But, in the first place, I must know your sex, and whether or not you have ever been sixteen years old. If your sex corresponds with my own, and your information on the other subject is equal to my own, then you will understand the thing completely. I was then as innocent as it is possible

for a youth of sixteen to be; nay, I was absolutely shy and bashful to a great degree, and would have shrunk from any advances, even to innocent familiarity, with the other sex. But I was not in love with Alice Lorimer. True, she preferred my company to that of any other person, save her dearly-beloved father; true, she sat on my knee, as she did on that of her parent, unconscious of any different feeling in the two positions; but we never talked of love; I would as soon have thought of talking of our being king and queen; and as to Alice, her friendship for me was as pure as the love of angels. She could not think of parting with me—of perhaps (and she burst into tears) never seeing me again. I must write to her—and I must come back and see her, and talk funnily to her father, who liked a joke—and I must—I forget how many "musts" there were; but they lasted till half-past one o'clock. I parted with her at her father's door. I never saw her again!

I was coming down Enterkin late in a fine moonlight night in the spring of 1806. I was on my way to join a family in Galloway, where I long acted in the capacity of tutor. I had then attained my twenty-first year; and I chanced to be calculating—as I expected seeing Alice Lorimer on the following day—what her age must be. Let me see, said I, so audibly that I started at my own utterance, as did a little pony I rode; and what followed was the sum of my reflections. I calculated, by the common rule of proportion, that if Alice was twelve when I was sixteen, she would be seventeen now that I was twenty-one. Seventeen! I repeated, just seventeen!—and I urged on the pony instinctively, as if hastening towards Croalchapel. But I had been five years at Edinburgh at College. What a change had come over the spirit of my dreams during that period! I had had to contend with fortune in many ways; had been often disappointed, and sometimes driven almost to despair; again I had prospered, got into lucrative employ-

ment, become a member of speaking societies, distinguished myself by talking sense and nonsense right and left. I had spent many merry evenings in Johnie Dowie's; and had seen Lady Charlotte Campbell and Tom Sheridan in a box at the theatre. In fact, I was not now the same being I was when I left for College; and I felt that, however fair and faultless Alice Lorimer might be, she could never be mine—I could never be hers; our fortunes were separated by a barrier which, when I went to College, I did not clearly perceive. In fact, my ambition now taught me to aim at the bar or the church; and I knew that, for years to come, I must be contented with a single life, which, in Edinburgh in particular, I had learned to endure without murmuring. Yet I thought of poor Alice with most kindly feelings, and had some secret doubts upon the propriety of exposing myself in her presence to a revival of old times and former feelings. In this tone of mind I was jogging on, with half a bottle of Mrs. Otto's (of Leadhills) best port wine under my belt, and endeavouring to collect some rhymes to the word Lorimer; but either the muse was unpropitious, or the word, like that mentioned in Horace, refused to stand in verse; it so happened that I had given up the effort, and was about to dismiss the subject altogether, when I discovered, near the bottom of the pass, a number of figures advancing upon me in an opposite direction. As they came up the pass, under a meridian moon, I could discover that they carried something on a barrow, which, on nearer inspection, I found to be a coffin. I drew my pony to the side of the road, lifted my hat reverentially, and the party, consisting of upwards of twenty, passed in solemn silence. The incident was a little startling, and somewhat unnatural, not to say superhuman; for, why were these people carrying a coffin up the long and narrow pass which separates Lanark from Dumfriesshire, so late at night, and in such mysterious

silence? A thought struck me, which contributed not a little to ease my mind in regard to supernaturals; were they a company of smugglers from Bowness, taking this method of carrying forward their untaxed goods to Lanark and Glasgow? Ruminating on this subject, and laughing inwardly at my own ingenuity and discernment, I arrived at last at Thornhill, where I remained for the night. Next morning I reached Croalchapel, on my way to my birth-place. I went up to that very door at which I had parted with Alice, some five years before, and endeavoured to open it; but it was shut and locked. I looked in at the end-window, above the fire-place; but there was neither fire nor inhabitant—all was silence. My heart sank within me; and a neighbour, who saw my ignorance and mistake, advertised me that both parent and child were no more; and that Alice Lorimer was *buried!*—here he hesitated, and seemed to retract the expression—"at least," said he, "committed to the earth last night!"

"Was she not buried by her father in the burial-ground of the Lorimers of Closeburn?" said I, hastily, and in an agitated tone. The man looked me in the face attentively, and, probably then for the first time recognising me, waved his hand, burst into tears, and left me. I hastened to the home of my fathers, half distracted. My mother still lived and enjoyed good health—from her I learned the following particulars.

John Lorimer's sight, she said, served him for a time, during which he wrought as usual, and his daughter grew to be a tall and handsome woman; but at last it began to fail, and he would put the elshun into a wrong place, or thrust it into his hand. Alice perceived this, and was most anxious to provide for her father under this irremediable calamity. She took in linen and bleached it on the bonny knowe among the gowans; she span yarn, and sold it at Thornhill fairs; in short, she did all she could to support

herself and her father in an honest and honourable way. But it was a severe struggle to make ends meet. In the meantime she had several offers of marriage; but refused them all, as she could not think of leaving her poor blind parent alone and helpless, and none of her lovers were rich enough to present a home to a supernumerary inmate. One evening, whilst, after a severe day's labour, she was sitting with old Poodle (her constant companion, but now likewise blind) by the fire, Mr. John Murdoch made his appearance. Her father had gone early to bed in the shop end of the house, and did not know of the man's visit. He came, he said, as a repentant sinner to relieve her necessities. He had occasioned her father's blindness, and he was glad to be made the instrument of bringing some pecuniary relief. Thus saying, he put into her hands a five-pound note, and, without waiting for a reply, took his departure. This startled poor Alice not a little; she looked at the money, then thought of the man, and again listened to see if her father was sleeping—at last, she put it into her chest, determined not to make use of it unless in case of necessity. The factor, who had hitherto been lenient, became urgent for the rent. There were two years due, and the five-pound note exactly covered the debt; away therefore it went into the factor's hands, and poor Alice returned thanks on her knees to Heaven, that had sent her the means of keeping from her father the knowledge of their situation.

In a few days Murdoch found her at the washing-green, and entered more particularly into the history of the money. He said it had been sent by one who had seen and admired her. He was on a visit at Barjarg, the proprietor being his uncle. He was the son and heir of a very rich man, not expected to live many months. He was determined to please himself in marrying, having observed great misery arise from adopting a contrary plan;

and he wished, in fine, to cultivate a further acquaintance with Alice, to whom he had sent another five-pound note in the meantime. In short, after exhibiting great reluctance to agree to a secret interview, and after having again and again tried to get words to communicate the whole matter to her father, a young gentleman of gaudy and genteel appearance made his way out of the adjoining wood, and was introduced by Murdoch as young Johnstone of Westerhall. Few words passed—poor Alice was quite nonplussed—she felt that she was not equal to this awful trial, and yet there was something fearfully pleasant in it. A young man, handsome and rich—her father blind and helpless—her hand quite at her own disposal—and independence and comfort brought to the good man's house for life. Her lover, however, did not press the thing further that time; he took his departure along with Murdoch, and Alice was a second time left to her own reflections. These, however, soon informed her that she was on the brink of perdition. She ran at once to her father, and, in a paroxysm of feeling, informed him of all that had passed. He reproved her, but gently, for her having devoted the money to the purpose which she mentioned; informed her that he was richer than she supposed, for he had just five pounds which her sainted mother had put into his hand on the marriage day; and that he was keeping, and had kept it sacred against the expenses of his funeral. He would now willingly give it to recover their house, and to free her from all temptation to sin. Alice wept; but she felt comforted in the assurance that, by repaying the money, and breaking off all connection with Murdoch and Johnstone, she was doing the right and the safe thing. Accordingly, she went to bed with a satisfied mind, determined next day to find out Murdoch's dwelling, and have everything settled to her father's advice and her own wish. She dressed herself in her best; and set out, soon after breakfast, for Barjarg

Castle, never to see her father again. She was betrayed by the revengeful Murdoch to a dissipated, a heartless debauchee; was carried by force betwixt Murdoch and him in a chaise to Dumfries; was lodged by Johnstone in convenient quarters. Every art was used to reconcile her to her situation: but all in vain; she stood her trials nobly; detected the old game of a private marriage; and afterwards refused to be united to Johnstone on any terms whatever. But in the meantime, poor John Lorimer missed his daughter, and immediately guessed the cause of it. Tibby Murdoch took care to inform him, for his comfort, that Alice had run away with the young Laird of Westerha', and, giggling and laughing all the while, that they were living very comfortably and lovingly in Dumfries. The blind man knew this to be all a lie, but he knew enough to kill him; he knew that his daughter was young and beautiful—that a villain had been endeavouring to inveigle her—that a still greater villain, Murdoch, had betrayed her—and that, in a word, she was now a poor dishonoured woman. He knew, or thought he knew, all this, and was found dead next morning in his bed. The doctors said he died of apoplexy! If it was, it was a mental apoplexy. Tired with fruitless efforts to gain his purpose, Johnstone at last permitted Alice to depart. In a few hours she was at her father's house; but it was desolate and silent. A paper, which was put into my hands, was evidently written by Alice. She expressed her determination to follow her dear father into another and a better world, and hoped Heaven would forgive her. It was her funeral I met at Enterkin Hers was

"The poor suicide's grave."

## THE SALMON-FISHER OF UDOLL.

In the autumn of 1759, the Bay of Udoll, an arm of the sea which intersects the southern shore of the Frith of Cromarty, was occupied by two large salmon wears, the property of one Allan Thomson, a native of the province of Moray, who had settled in this part of the country a few months before. He was a thin, athletic, raw-boned man, of about five feet ten, well nigh in his thirtieth year, but apparently younger; erect and clean-limbed, with a set of handsome features, bright intelligent eyes, and a profusion of dark-brown hair, curling round an ample expanse of forehead. For the first twenty years of his life, he had lived about a farm-house, tending cattle when a boy, and guiding the plough when he had grown up; he then travelled into England, where he wrought about seven years as a common labourer. A novelist would scarcely make choice of such a person for the hero of a tale; but men are to be estimated rather by the size and colour of their minds, than the complexion of their circumstances; and this ploughman and labourer of the north was by no means a very common man. For the latter half of his life, he had pursued, in all his undertakings, one main design. He saw his brother rustics tied down by circumstance—that destiny of vulgar minds—to a youth of toil and dependence, and an old age of destitution and wretchedness; and, with a force of character which, had he been placed at his outset on what may be termed the table-land of fortune, would have raised him to her higher pinnacles, he persisted in adding shilling to shilling and pound to pound,

not in the sordid spirit of the miser, but in the hope that his little hoard might yet serve him as a kind of stepping-stone in rising to a more comfortable place in society. Nor were his desires fixed very high; for, convinced that independence and the happiness which springs from situation in life lie within the reach of the frugal farmer of sixty or eighty acres, he moulded his ambition on the conviction; and scarcely looked beyond the period at which he anticipated his savings would enable him to take his place among the humbler tenantry of the country.

Our firths and estuaries at this period abounded with salmon—one of the earliest exports of the kingdom; but from the low state into which commerce had sunk in the northern districts, and the irregularity of the communication kept up between them and the sister kingdom, by far the greater part caught on our shores were consumed by the inhabitants. And so little were they deemed a luxury, that it was by no means uncommon, it is said, for servants to stipulate with their masters that they should not have to diet on salmon oftener than thrice a-week. Thomson, however, had seen quite enough, when in England, to convince him, that, meanly as they were esteemed by his countryfolks, they might be rendered the staple of a profitable trade; and, removing to the vicinity of Cromarty, for the facilities it afforded in trading to the capital, he launched boldly into the speculation. He erected his two wears with his own hands; built himself a cottage of sods on the gorge of a little ravine, sprinkled over with bushes of alder and hazel; entered into correspondence with a London merchant, whom he engaged as his agent; and began to export his fish by two large sloops, which plied, at this period, between the neighbouring port and the capital. His fishings were abundant, and his agent an honest one; and he soon began to realize the sums he had expended in establishing himself in the trade.

Could any one anticipate that a story of fondly-cherished, but hapless attachment—of one heart blighted for ever, and another fatally broken—was to follow such an introduction?

The first season of Thomson's speculation had come to a close; winter set in; and, with scarcely a single acquaintance among the people in the neighbourhood, and little to employ him, he had to draw for amusement on his own resources alone. He had formed, when a boy, a taste for reading; and might now be found in the long evenings, hanging over a book, beside the fire; by day, he went sauntering among the fields, calculating on the advantages of every agricultural improvement; or attended the fairs and trysts of the country, to speculate on the profits of the drover and cattle-feeder, and make himself acquainted with all the little mysteries of bargain-making.

There holds, early in November, a famous cattle market in the ancient barony of Ferntosh; and Thomson had set out to attend it. The morning was clear and frosty, and he felt buoyant of heart and limb, as passing westwards along the shore, he saw the huge Ben-Nevis towering darker and more loftily over the Frith as he advanced; or turned aside, from time to time, to explore some ancient burying-ground or Danish encampment. There is not a tract of country of equal extent in the three kingdoms, where antiquities of this class lie thicker than in that northern strip of the parish of Resolis which bounds on the Cromarty Frith. The old castle of Craig House, a venerable, time-shattered building, detained him, amid its broken arches, for hours; and he was only reminded of the ultimate object of his journey, when, on surveying the moor from the upper bartizan, he saw that the groups of men and cattle which, since morning, had been mottling in succession the track leading to the fair, were all gone out of sight; and that, far as the eye could reach not a human

figure was to be seen. The whole population of the country seemed to have gone to the fair. He quitted the ruins, and, after walking smartly over the heathy ridge to the west, and through the long birch-wood of Kinbeakie, he reached about mid-day the little straggling village at which the market holds.

Thomson had never before attended a thoroughly Highland market; and the scene now presented was wholly new to him. The area it occupied was an irregular opening in the middle of the village, broken by ruts, and dung-hills, and heaps of stone. In front of the little turf-houses on either side, there was a row of booths, constructed mostly of poles and blankets, in which much whisky, and a few of the simpler articles of foreign merchandise, were sold. In the middle of the open space, there were carts and benches, laden with the rude manufactures of the country —Highland brogues and blankets; bowls and platters of beech; a species of horse and cattle harness, formed of the twisted twigs of birch; bundles of split fir, for lath and torches; and hair tackle and nets, for fishermen. Nearly seven thousand persons, male and female, thronged the area bustling and busy, and in continual motion, like the tides and eddies of two rivers at their confluence. There were countrywomen, with their shaggy little horses, laden with cheese and butter; Highlanders from the far hills, with droves of sheep and cattle; shoemakers and weavers, from the neighbouring villages, with bales of webs and wallets of shoes; farmers and fishermen, engaged as it chanced in buying or selling; bevies of bonny lasses, attired in their gayest; ploughmen and mechanics; drovers, butchers, and herd-boys. Whisky flowed abundantly, whether bargain-makers bought or sold, or friends met or parted; and, as the day wore later, the confusion and bustle of the crowd increased. A Highland tryst, even in the present age, rarely passes without witnessing a fray; and the Highlanders,

seventy years ago, were of more combative dispositions than they are now; but Thomson, who had neither friend nor enemy among the thousands around him, neither quarreled himself, nor interfered in the quarrels of others. He merely stood and looked on, as a European would among the frays of one of the great fairs of Bagdad or Astracan.

He was passing through the crowd, towards evening, in front of one of the dingier cottages, when a sudden burst of oaths and exclamations rose from within, and the inmates came pouring out pell-mell at the door, to throttle and pummel one another, in inextricable confusion. A grey headed old man, of great apparent strength, who seemed by far the most formidable of the combatants, was engaged in desperate battle with two young fellows from the remote Highlands, while all the others were matched man to man. Thomson, whose residence in England had taught him very different notions of fair play and the ring, was on the eve of forgetting his caution and interfering; but the interference proved unnecessary. Ere he had stepped up to the combatants, the old man, with a vigour little lessened by age, had shaken off both his opponents; and, though they stood glaring at him like tiger cats, neither of them seemed in the least inclined to renew the attack.

"Twa mean pitiful kerns," exclaimed the old man, "to tak odds against ane auld enough to be their faither! an that, too, after burning my loof wi' the het airn! But I hae noited their twa heads thegither! Sic a trick!—to bid me stir up the fire, after they had heated the wrang end o' the poker! Deil but I hae a guid mind to gie them baith mair o't yet!"

Ere he could make good his threat, however, his daughter, a delicate-looking girl of nineteen, came rushing up to him through the crowd. "Father!" she exclaimed, "dearest father! let us away. For my sake, if not your own, let these wild men alone; they always carry knives; and,

besides, you will bring all of their clan upon you that are at the tryst, and you will be murdered."

"No muckle danger frae that, Lillias," said the old man. "I hae little fear frae ony ane o' them; an' if they come by twasome, I hae my friends here to. The ill-deedy wratches, to blister a' my loof wi' the poker! But come awa, lassie; your advice is, I daresay, best after a'."

The old man quitted the place with his daughter; and, for the time, Thomson saw no more of him. As the night approached, the Highlanders became more noisy and turbulent; they drank, and disputed, and drove their very bargains at the dirk's point; and, as the salmon-fisher passed through the village for the last time, he could see the waving of bludgeons, and hear the formidable war-cry of one of the clans, with the equally formidable, "Hilloa! help for Cromarty!" echoing on every side of him. He kept coolly on his way, however, without waiting the result; and while yet several miles from the shores of Udoll, daylight had departed, and the moon at full had risen, red and huge in the frosty atmosphere, over the bleak hill of Nigg.

He had reached the burn of Newhall—a small stream, which, after winding for several miles between its double row of alders, and its thickets of gorse and hazel, falls into the upper part of the bay—and was cautiously picking his way, by the light of the moon, along a narrow pathway which winds among the bushes. There are few places in the country of worse repute among believers in the supernatural than the burn of Newhall; and its character seventy years ago was even worse than it is at present. Witch meetings without number have been held on its banks, and dead lights have been seen hovering over its deeper pools. Sportsmen have charged their fowling-pieces with silver when crossing it in the night-time; and I remember an old man who never approached it after dark without fixing a

bayonet on the head of his staff. Thomson, however, was but little influenced by the beliefs of the period; and he was passing under the shadow of the alders, with more of this world than of the other in his thoughts, when the silence was suddenly broken by a burst of threats and exclamations, as if several men had fallen a-fighting, scarcely fifty yards away, without any preliminary quarrel; and, with the gruffer noises, there mingled the shrieks and entreaties of a female. Thomson grasped his stick and sprang forward. He reached an opening among the bushes, and saw in the imperfect light the old robust Lowlander of the previous fray attacked by two men armed with bludgeons, and defending himself manfully with his staff. The old man's daughter, who had clung round the knees of one of the ruffians, was already thrown to the ground and trampled under foot. An exclamation of wrath and horror burst from the high-spirited fisherman, as, rushing upon the fellow like a tiger from its jungle, he caught the stroke aimed at him on his stick, and with a sidelong blow on the temple, felled him to the ground. At the instant he fell, a gigantic Highlander leaped from among the bushes, and raising his huge arm, discharged a tremendous blow at the head of the fisherman, who, though taken unawares and at a disadvantage, succeeded, notwithstanding, in transferring it to his left shoulder, where it fell broken and weak. A desperate but brief combat ensued. The ferocity and ponderous strength of the Celt, found their more than match in the cool, vigilant skill, and leopard-like agility of the Lowland Scot; for the latter, after discharging a storm of blows on the head, face, and shoulders of the giant, until he staggered, at length struck his bludgeon out of his hand, and prostrated his whole huge length by dashing his stick endlong against his breast. At nearly the same moment the burly old farmer, who had grappled with his antagonist, had succeeded in flinging him, stunned and senseless, against the

gnarled root of an alder; and the three ruffians—for the first had not yet recovered—lay stretched on the grass. Ere they could secure them, however, a shrill whistle was heard echoing from among the alders, scarcely a hundred yards away. "We had better get home," said Thomson to the old man, "ere these fellows are reinforced by their brother ruffians in the wood." And, supporting the maiden with his one hand, and grasping his stick with the other, he plunged among the bushes in the direction of the path, and, gaining it, passed onward, lightly and hurriedly, with his charge; the old man followed more heavily behind; and, in somewhat less than an hour after, they were all seated beside the hearth of the latter, in the farm-house of Meikle Farness.

It is now more than forty years since the last stone of the very foundation has disappeared; but the little grassy eminence on which the house stood may still be seen. There is a deep-wooded ravine behind, which, after winding through the table-land of the parish, like a huge crooked furrow—the bed evidently of some antediluvian stream—opens far below to the sea; an undulating tract of field and moor—with here and there a thicket of bushes, and here and there a heap of stone—spreads in front. When I last looked on the scene, 'twas in the evening of a pleasant day in June. One half the eminence was bathed in the red light of the setting sun—the other lay brown and dark in the shadow. A flock of sheep were scattered over the sunny side; the herd-boy sat on the top, solacing his leisure with a music famous in the pastoral history of Scotland, but now well-nigh exploded—that of the *stock* and *horn;* and the air seemed filled with its echoes. I stood picturing to myself the appearance of the place, ere all the inmates of this evening, young and old, had gone to the churchyard, and left no successors behind them; and as I sighed over the vanity of human hopes, I could almost fancy I saw an

apparition of the cottage rising on the knoll. I could see the dark turf walls; the little square windows, barred below and glazed above; the straw roof, embossed with moss and stone-crop; and, high overhead, the row of venerable elms, with their gnarled trunks and twisted branches that rose out of the garden wall. Fancy gives an interest to all her pictures—yes, even when the subject is but a humble cottage; and when we think of human enjoyment—of the pride of strength and the light of beauty—in connection with a few mouldering and nameless bones hidden deep from the sun, there is a sad poetry in the contrast which rarely fails to affect the heart. It is now two thousand years since Horace sung of the security of the lowly, and the unfluctuating nature of their enjoyments; and every year of the two thousand has been adding proof to proof that the poet, when he chose his theme, must have thrown aside his philosophy. But the inmates of the farm-house thought little this evening of coming misfortune—nor would it have been well if they had; their sorrow was neither heightened nor hastened by their joy.

Old William Stewart, the farmer, was one of a class well-nigh worn out in the southern Lowlands, even at this period; but which still comprised in the northern districts no inconsiderable portion of the people; and which must always obtain in countries only partially civilized and little amenable to the laws. Man is a fighting animal from very instinct; and his second nature, custom, mightily improves the propensity. A person naturally courageous, who has defended himself successfully in half-a-dozen different frays, will, very probably, begin the seventh himself; and there are few who have fought often and well for safety and the right, who have not at length learned to love fighting for its own sake. The old farmer had been a man of war from his youth. He had fought at fairs, and trysts, and weddings, and funerals; and, without one ill-natured or malig-

nant element in his composition, had broken more heads than any two men in the country side. His late quarrel at the tryst, and the much more serious affair among the bushes, had arisen out of this disposition; for, though well-nigh in his sixtieth year, he was still as warlike in his habits as ever. Thomson sat fronting him beside the fire, admiring his muscular frame, huge limbs, and immense structure of bone. Age had grizzled his hair and furrowed his cheeks and forehead; but all the great strength, and well-nigh all the activity of his youth, it had left him still. His wife, a sharp-featured, little woman, seemed little interested in either the details of his adventure or his guest, whom he described as the "brave, hardy chield, wha had beaten twasome at the cudgel—the vera littlest o' them as big as himsel."

"Och, guidman," was her concluding remark, "ye aye stick to the auld trade, bad though it be; an' I'm feared that, or ye mend, ye maun be aulder yet. I'm sure ye ne'er made your ain money o't."

"Nane o' yer nonsense," rejoined the farmer—"bring butt the bottle an' your best cheese."

"The guidwife an' I dinna aye agree," continued the old man, turning to Thomson. "She's baith near-gaun an' new-fangled; an' I like aye to hae routh o' a' things, an' to live just as my faithers did afore me. Why sould I bother my head wi' *improvidments*, as they ca' them? The country's gane clean gite wi' pride, Thomson. Naething less sairs folk noo, forsooth, than carts wi' wheels to them; an' it's no a fortnight syne sin' little Sandy Martin, the trifling cat, jeered me for yoking my owsen to the plough by the tail. What ither did they get tails for?"

Thomson had not sufficiently studied the grand argument of design in this special instance, to hazard a reply.

"The times hae gane clean oot o' joint," continued the old man. "The law has come a' the length o' Cromarty

noo; an' for breaking the head o' an impudent fallow, ane runs the risk o' being sent aff to the plantations. Faith, I wish oor Parliamenters had mair sense. What do they ken aboot us or oor country? Diel haet difference do they mak atween the shire o' Cromarty an' the shire o' Lunnon; just as if we could be as quiet beside the red-wud Hielanmen here, as they can be beside the queen. Na, na—naething like a guid cudgel;—little wad their law hae dune for me at the burn o' Newhall the nicht."

Thomson found the character of the old man quite a study in its way; and that of his wife—a very different, and, in the main, inferior sort of person, for she was mean-spirited and a niggard—quite a study too. But by far the most interesting inmate of the cottage was the old man's daughter—the child of a former marriage. She was a pale, delicate, blue-eyed girl, who, without possessing much positive beauty of feature, had that expression of mingled thought and tenderness which attracts more powerfully than beauty itself. She spoke but little—that little, however, was expressive of gratitude and kindness to the deliverer of her father—sentiments which, in the breast of a girl so gentle, so timid, so disposed to shrink from the roughnesses of active courage, and yet so conscious of her need of a protector, must have mingled with a feeling of admiration at finding, in the powerful champion of the recent fray, a modest, sensible young man, of manners nearly as quiet and unobtrusive as her own. She dreamed that night of Thomson, and her first thought, as she awakened next morning, was whether, as her father had urged, he was to be a frequent visitor at Meikle Farness. But an entire week passed away, and she saw no more of him.

He was sitting one evening in his cottage, poring over a book—a huge fire of brushwood was blazing against the earthen wall, filling the upper part of the single rude chamber of which the cottage consisted with a dense cloud of

smoke, and glancing brightly on the few rude implements which occupied the lower—when the door suddenly opened, and the farmer of Meikle Farness entered, accompanied by his daughter.

"Ha! Allan, man," he said, extending his large hand and grasping that of the fisherman; "if you winna come an' see us, we maun just come an' see you. Lillias an' mysel were afraid the guidwife had frichtened you awa—for she's a near-gaun sort o' body, an' maybe no owre kind spoken; but ye maun just come an' see us whiles, an' no mind her. Except at counting-time, I never mind her mysel." Thomson accommodated his visitors with seats. "Yer life maun be a gay lonely ane here, in this eerie bit o' a glen," remarked the old man, after they had conversed for some time on indifferent subjects; "but I see ye dinna want company a'thegither, such as it is"—his eye glancing as he spoke over a set of deal shelves, occupied by some sixty or seventy volumes. "Lillias there has a liking for that kind o' company too, an' spends some days mair o' her time amang her books than the guidwife or mysel would wish."

Lillias blushed at the charge, and hung down her head; it gave, however, a new turn to the conversation; and Thomson was gratified to find that the quiet, gentle girl, who seemed so much interested in him, and whose gratitude to him, expressed in a language less equivocal than any spoken one, he felt to be so delicious a compliment, possessed a cultivated mind and a superior understanding. She had lived, under the roof of her father, in a little paradise of thoughts and imaginations, the spontaneous growth of her own mind; and, as she grew up to womanhood, she had recourse to the companionship of books—for in books only could she find thoughts and imaginations of a kindred character.

It is rarely that the female mind educates itself. The

genius of the sex is rather fine than robust; it partakes rather of the delicacy of the myrtle, than the strength of the oak; and care and culture seem essential to its full development. Who ever heard of a female Burns or Bloomfield? And yet there have been instances, though rare, of women working their way from the lower levels of intellect to well-nigh the highest—not wholly unassisted, 'tis true—the age must be a cultivated one, and there must be opportunities of observation; but, if not wholly unassisted, with helps so slender, that the second order of masculine minds would find them wholly inefficient. There is a quickness of perception and facility of adaptation in the better class of female minds—an ability of catching the tone of whatever is good from the sounding of a single note, if I may so express myself, which we almost never meet with in the mind of man. Lillias was a favourable specimen of the better and more intellectual order of women; but she was yet very young, and the process of self-cultivation carrying on in her mind was still incomplete. And Thomson found that the charm of her society arose scarcely more from her partial knowledge, than from her partial ignorance. The following night saw him seated by her side in the farm-house of Meikle Farness; and scarcely a week passed during the winter in which he did not spend at least one evening in her company.

Who is it that has not experienced the charm of female conversation—that poetry of feeling which developes all of tenderness and all of imagination that lies hidden in our nature? When following the ordinary concerns of life, or engaged in its more active businesses, many of the better faculties of our minds seem overlaid; there is little of feeling and nothing of fancy; and those sympathies which should bind us to the good and fair of nature, lie repressed and inactive. But in the society of an intelligent and virtuous female, there is a charm that removes the pressure.

Through the force of sympathy, we throw our intellects for the time into the female mould; our tastes assimilate to the tastes of our companion; our feelings keep pace with hers; our sensibilities become nicer, and our imaginations more expansive; and, though the powers of our mind may not much excel, in kind or degree, those of the great bulk of mankind, we are sensible that, for the time, we experience some of the feelings of genius. How many common men have not female society and the fervour of youthful passion sublimed into poets! I am convinced the Greeks displayed as much sound philosophy as good taste in representing their muses as beautiful women.

Thomson had formerly been but an admirer of the poets —he now became a poet; and, had his fate been a kindlier one, he might perhaps have attained a middle place among at least the minor professors of the incommunicable art. He was walking with Lillias one evening through the wooded ravine. It was early in April, and the day had combined the loveliest smiles of spring with the fiercer blasts of winter. There was snow in the hollows; but, where the sweeping sides of the dell reclined to the south, the violet and the primrose were opening to the sun. The drops of a recent shower were still hanging on the half-expanded buds, and the streamlet was yet red and turbid; but the sun, nigh at his setting, was streaming in golden glory along the field, and a lark was caroling high in the air, as if its day were but begun. Lillias pointed to the bird, diminished almost to a speck, but relieved by the red light against a minute cloudlet.

"Happy little creature!" she exclaimed—"does it not seem rather a thing of heaven than of earth? Does not its song frae the cloud mind you of the hymn heard by the shepherds? The blast is but just owre, an' a few minutes syne it lay cowering and chittering in its nest; but its sorrows are a' gane, an' its heart rejoices in the

bonny blink, without ae thought o' the storm that has passed, or the night that comes on. Were you a poet, Allan, like any o' your two namesakes—he o' "The Seasons," or he o' the "Gentle Shepherd"—I would ask you for a song on that bonny burdie." Next time the friends met, Thomson produced the following verses:—

TO THE LARK.

Sweet minstrel of the April cloud!
Dweller the flowers among!
Would that my heart were formed like thine,
And tun'd like thine my song!
Not to the earth, like earth's low gifts,
Thy soothing strain is given;
It comes a voice from middle sky,
A solace breathed from heaven.

Thine is the morn; and when the sun
Sinks peaceful in the west,
The mild light of departing da
Purples thy happy breast.
And, ah! though all beneath that sun
Dire pains and sorrows dwell,
Rarely they visit, short they stay,
Where thou hast built thy cell.

When wild winds rave, and snows descend,
And dark clouds gather fast,
And on the surf-encircled shore
The seaman's bark is cast—
Long human grief survives the storm,
But thou, thrice happy bird!
No sooner has it passed away,
Than, lo! thy voice is heard.

When ill is present, grief is thine;
It flies, and thou art free;
But, ah! can aught achieve for man
What nature does for thee!
Man grieves amid the bursting storm;
When smiles the calm he grieves;
Nor cease his woes, nor sinks his plaint,
Till dust his dust receives.

As the latter month of spring came on, the fisherman again betook himself to his wears, and nearly a fortnight passed in which he saw none of the inmates of the farm-house. Nothing is so efficient as absence, whether self-imposed or the result of circumstances, in convincing a lover that he is truly such, and in teaching him how to estimate the strength of his attachment. Thomson had sat, night after night, beside Lillias Stewart, delighted with the delicacy of her taste and the originality and beauty of her ideas—delighted, too, to watch the still partially developed faculties of her mind, shooting forth and expanding into bud and blossom under the fostering influence of his own more matured powers. But the pleasure which arises from the interchange of idea and the contemplation of mental beauty, or the interest which every thinking mind must feel in marking the aspirations of a superior intellect towards its proper destiny, is not love; and it was only now that Thomson ascertained the true scope and nature of his feelings.

"She is already my *friend*," thought he; "if my schemes prosper, I shall be in a few years what her father is now; and may then ask her whether she will not be *more*. Till then, however, she shall be my friend, and my friend only; I find I love her too well to make her the wife of either a poor, unsettled speculator, or still poorer labourer."

He renewed his visits to the farm-house, and saw, with a discernment quickened by his feelings, that his mistress had made a discovery with regard to her own affections somewhat similar to his, and at a somewhat earlier period. She herself could have, perhaps, fixed the date of it by referring to that of their acquaintance. He imparted to her his scheme and the uncertainties which attended it, with his determination, were he unsuccessful in his designs, to do battle with the evils of penury and dependence without a companion; and, though she felt that she could deem

it a happiness to make common cause with him even in such a contest, she knew how to appreciate his motives, and loved him all the more for them. Never, perhaps, in the whole history of the passion, were there two lovers happier in their hopes and each other. But there was a cloud gathering over them.

Thomson had never been an especial favourite with the stepmother of Lillias. She had formed plans of her own for the settlement of her daughter, with which the attentions of the salmon-fisher threatened materially to interfere. And there was a total want of sympathy between them besides. Even William, though he still retained a sort of rough regard for him, had begun to look askance on his intimacy with Lillias;—his avowed love, too, for the modern, gave no little offence. The farm of Meikle Farness was obsolete enough in its usages and modes of tillage, to have formed no uninteresting study to the antiquary. Towards autumn, when the fields vary most in colour, it resembled a rudely executed chart of some large island—so irregular were the patches which composed it, and so broken on every side by a surrounding sea of moor, that here and there went winding into the interior in long river-like strips, or expanded, within, into friths and lakes. In one corner there stood a heap of stones, in another a thicket of furze—here a piece of bog, there a broken bank of clay. The implements with which the old man laboured in his fields were as primitive in their appearance as the fields themselves—there was the one-stilted plough, the wooden-toothed harrow, and the basket-woven cart, with its rollers of wood. With these, too, there was the usual misproportion on the farm, to its extent, of lean, inefficient cattle, four half-starved animals performing, with incredible effort, the work of one. Thomson would fain have induced the old man, who was evidently sinking in the world, to have recourse to a better system—but he gained wondrous little

by his advice. And there was another cause which operated still more decidedly against him: a wealthy young farmer in the neighbourhood had been, for the last few months, not a little diligent in his attentions to Lillias. He had lent the old man, at the preceding term, a considerable sum of money; and had ingratiated himself with the stepmother, by chiming in on all occasions with her humour, and by a present or two besides. Under the auspices of both parents, therefore, he had now paid his addresses to Lillias; and, on meeting with a repulse, had stirred them both up against Thomson.

The fisherman was engaged one evening in fishing his nets; the ebb was that of a stream tide, and the bottom of almost the entire bay lay exposed to the light of the setting sun, save that a river-like strip of water wound through the midst. He had brought his gun with him, in the hope of finding a seal or otter asleep on the outer banks; but there were none this evening; and, laying down his piece against one of the poles of the wear, he was employed in capturing a fine salmon that went darting like a bird from side to side of the inner enclosure, when he heard some one hailing him by name from outside the nets. He looked up, and saw three men, one of whom he recognised as the young farmer who was paying his addresses to Lillias, approaching from the opposite side of the bay. They were all apparently much in liquor, and came staggering towards him in a zig-zag track along the sands. A suspicion crossed his mind that he might find them other than friendly; and, coming out of the enclosure, where, from the narrowness of the space and the depth of the water, he would have lain much at their mercy, he employed himself in picking off the patches of sea-weed that adhered to the nets, when they came up to him and assailed him with a torrent of threats and reproaches. He pursued his occupation with the utmost coolness, turning round, from time to time, to

repay their abuse by some cutting repartee. His assailants discovered they were to gain little in this sort of contest; and Thomson found in turn that they were much less disguised in liquor than he had at first supposed, or than they seemed desirous to make it appear. In reply to one of his more cutting sarcasms, the tallest of the three, a ruffian-looking fellow, leaped forward and struck him on the face; and in a moment he had returned the blow with such hearty good-will that the fellow was dashed against one of the poles. The other two rushed in to close with him. He seized his gun, and, springing out from beside the nets to the open bank, dealt the farmer, with the but-end a tremendous blow on the face, which prostrated him in an instant; and then cocking the piece and presenting it, he commanded the other two, on peril of their lives, to stand aloof. Odds of weapons, when there is courage to avail oneself of them, forms a thorough counterbalance to odds of number. After an engagement of a brief half minute, Thomson's assailants left him in quiet possession of the field; and he found, on his way home, that he could trace their route by the blood of the young farmer. There went abroad an exaggerated and very erroneous edition of the story, highly unfavourable to the salmon-fisher; and he received an intimation, shortly after, that his visits at the farm-house were no longer expected. But the intimation came not from Lillias.

The second year of his speculation had well-nigh come to a close, and, in calculating on the quantum of his shipments and the state of the markets, he could deem it a more successful one than even the first. But his agent seemed to be assuming a new and worse character: he either substituted promises and apologies for his usual remittances, or neglected writing altogether; and, as the fisherman was employed one day in dismantling his wears for the season, his worst fears were realized by the astounding intelligence

that the embarrassments of the merchant had at length terminated in a final suspension of payments!

"There," said he, with a coolness which partook in its nature in no slight degree of that insensibility of pain and injury which follows a violent blow—"there go well-nigh all the hard-earned savings of twelve years, and all my hopes of happiness with Lillias!" He gathered up his utensils with an automaton-like carefulness, and, throwing them over his shoulders, struck across the sands in the direction of the cottage. "I must see *her*," he said, "once more, and bid her farewell." His heart swelled to his throat at the thought; but, as if ashamed of his weakness, he struck his foot firmly against the sand, and, proudly raising himself to his full height, quickened his pace. He reached the door, and, looking wistfully, as he raised the latch, in the direction of the farm-house, his eye caught a female figure coming towards the cottage through the bushes of the ravine. "'Tis poor Lillias!" he exclaimed. "Can she already have heard that I am unfortunate, and that we must part?" He went up to her, and, as he pressed her hand between both his, she burst into tears.

It was a sad meeting—meetings must ever be such when the parties that compose them bring each a separate grief, which becomes common when imparted.

"I cannot tell you," said Lillias to her lover, "how unhappy I am. My stepmother has not much love to bestow on any one; and so, though it be in her power to deprive me of the quiet I value so much, I care comparatively little for her resentment. Why should I not? She is interested in no one but herself. As for Simpson, I can despise without hating him; wasps sting, just because it is their nature, and some people seem born in the same way, to be mean-spirited and despicable. But my poor father, who has been so kind to me, and who has so much heart about him—his displeasure has the bitterness of

death to me. And then he is so wildly and unjustly angry with you. Simpson has got him, by some means, into his power—I know not how; my stepmother annoys him continually; and, from the state of irritation in which he is kept, he is saying and doing the most violent things imaginable, and making me so unhappy by his threats." And she again burst into tears.

Thomson had but little of comfort to impart to her. Indeed he could afterwards wonder at the indifference with which he beheld her tears, and the coolness with which he communicated to her the story of his disaster. But he had not yet recovered his natural tone of feeling. Who has not observed that, while, in men of an inferior and weaker cast, any sudden and overwhelming misfortune unsettles their whole minds, and all is storm and uproar, in minds of a superior order, when subjected to the same ordeal, there takes place a kind of freezing, hardening process, under which they maintain at least apparent coolness and self-possession? Grief acts as a powerful solvent to the one class—to the other, it is as the waters of a petrifying spring.

"Alas, my Lillias!" said the fisherman, "we have not been born for happiness and each other. We must part—each of us to struggle with our respective evils. Call up all your strength of mind—the much in your character that has as yet lain unemployed—and so despicable a thing as Simpson will not dare to annoy you. You may yet meet with a man worthy of you; some one who will love you as well as—as one who can at least appreciate your value, and who will deserve you better." As he spoke, and his mistress listened in silence and in tears, William Stewart burst in upon them through the bushes; and with a countenance flushed, and a frame tremulous with passion, assailed the fisherman with a torrent of threats and reproaches. He even raised his hand. The prudence of

Thomson gave way under the provocation. Ere the blow had descended, he had locked the farmer in his grasp, and with an exertion of strength which scarcely a giant would be capable of in a moment of less excitement, he raised him from the earth, and forced him against the grassy side of the ravine, where he held him despite of his efforts. A shriek from Lillias recalled him to the command of himself. "William Stewart," he said, quitting his hold and stepping back, "you are an old man, and the father of Lillias." The farmer rose slowly and collectedly, with a flushed cheek but a quiet eye, as if all his anger had evaporated in the struggle, and, turning to his daughter—

"Come, Lillias, my lassie," he said, laying hold of her arm, "I have been too hasty—I have been in the wrong." And so they parted.

Winter came on, and Thomson was again left to the solitude of his cottage, with only his books and his own thoughts to employ him. He found little amusement or comfort in either; he could think of only Lillias—that she loved and was yet lost to him.

"Generous, and affectionate, and confiding," he has said, when thinking of her, "I know she would willingly share with me in my poverty; but ill would I repay her kindness in demanding of her such a sacrifice. Besides, how could I endure to see her subjected to the privations of a destiny so humble as mine? The same heaven that seems to have ordained me to labour and to be unsuccessful, has given me a mind not to be broken by either toil or disappointment; but keenly and bitterly would I feel the evils of both, were she to be equally exposed. I must strive to forget her, or think of her only as my friend." And, indulging in such thoughts as these, and repeating and re-repeating similar resolutions—only, however, to find them unavailing—winter, with its long, dreary nights, and its days of languor and inactivity, passed heavily away. But it passed.

He was sitting beside his fire, one evening late in February, when a gentle knock was heard at the door. He started up, and, drawing back the bar, William Stewart entered the apartment.

"Allan," said the old man, "I have come to have some conversation with you, and would have come sooner, but pride and shame kept me back. I fear I have been much to blame."

Thomson motioned him to a seat, and sat down beside him.

"Farmer," he said, "since we cannot recall the past, we had, perhaps, better forget it."

The old man bent forward his head till it rested almost on his knee, and for a few moments remained silent.

"I fear, Allan, I have been much to blame," he at length reiterated. "Ye maun come an' see Lillias. She is ill, very ill—an' I fear no very like to get better." Thomson was stunned by the intelligence, and answered he scarcely knew what. "She has never been richt hersel," continued the old man, "sin' the unlucky day when you an' I met in the burn here; but for the last month she has been little out o' her bed. Since mornin there has been a great change on her, an' she wishes to see you. I fear we havena meikle time to spare, an' had better gang." Thomson followed him in silence.

They reached the farm-house of Meikle Farness, and entered the chamber where the maiden lay. A bright fire of brushwood threw a flickering gloom on the floor and rafters, and their shadows, as they advanced, seemed dancing on the walls. Close beside the bed there was a small table, bearing a lighted candle, and with a Bible lying open upon it, at that chapter of Corinthians in which the Apostle assures us that the dead shall rise and the mortal put on immortality. Lillias half sat, half reclined, in the upper part of the bed. Her thin and wasted features

had already the stiff rigidity of death, her cheeks and lips were colourless, and, though the blaze seemed to dance and flicker on her half-closed eyes, they served no longer to intimate to the departing spirit the existence of external things.

"Ah, my Lillias!" exclaimed Thomson, as he bent over her, his heart swelling with an intense agony. "Alas! has it come to this!"

His well-known voice served to recall her, as from the precincts of another world. A faint melancholy smile passed over her features, and she held out her hand.

"I was afraid," she said, in a voice sweet and gentle as ever, though scarcely audible through extreme weakness, "I was afraid that I was never to see you more. Draw nearer—there is a darkness coming over me, and I hear but imperfectly. I may now say with a propriety which no one will challenge, what I durst not have said before. Need I tell you that you were the dearest of all my friends —the only man I ever loved—the man whose lot, however low and unprosperous, I would have deemed it a happiness to be invited to share? I do not, however—I cannot reproach you. I depart and for ever; but, oh, let not a single thought of me render you unhappy; my few years of life have not been without their pleasures, and I go to a better and brighter world. I am weak and cannot say more; but let me hear you speak. Read to me the eighth chapter of Romans."

Thomson, with a voice tremulous and faltering through emotion, read the chapter. Ere he had made an end, the maiden had again sunk into the state of apparent insensibility out of which she had been so lately awakened; though, occasionally, a faint pressure of his hand, which she still retained, shewed him that she was not unconscious of his presence. At length, however, there was a total relaxation of the grasp—the cold damp of the stiffening palm

struck a chill to his heart—there was a fluttering of the pulse, a glazing of the eye—the breast ceased to heave, the heart to beat—the silver cord parted in twain, and the golden bowl was broken. Thomson contemplated, for a moment, the body of his mistress, and, striking his hand against his forehead, rushed out of the apartment.

He attended her funeral—he heard the earth falling heavy and hollow on the coffin-lid—he saw the green sod placed over her grave—he witnessed the irrepressible anguish of her father, and the sad regret of her friends—and all this without shedding a tear. He was turning to depart, when some one thrust a letter into his hand; he opened it almost mechanically. It contained a considerable sum of money, and a few lines from his agent, stating that, in consequence of a favourable change in his circumstances, he had been enabled to satisfy all his creditors. Thomson crumpled up the bills in his hand. He felt as if his heart stood still in his breast; a noise seemed ringing in his ears; a mist cloud appeared as if rising out of the earth and darkening round him. He was caught, when falling, by old William Stewart, and, on awakening to consciousness and the memory of the past, found himself in his arms. He lived for about ten years after, a laborious and speculative man, ready to oblige, and successful in all his designs. And no one deemed him unhappy. It was observed, however, that his dark brown hair was soon mingled with masses of grey, and that his tread became heavy and his frame bent. It was remarked, too, that, when attacked by a lingering epidemic, which passed over well-nigh the whole country, he of all the people was the only one that sank under it.

# THE LINTON LAIRDS, OR EXCLUSIVES AND INCLUSIVES.

In no part of her Majesty's wide-spread dominions does mighty Aristocracy rear its proud head with greater majesty than at Linton. There are, or were, in the neighbourhood of that ancient borough, no fewer than forty-five lairds, all possessing portions of the soil; and from the soil it is that the big genius of aristocratic pride derives, like the old oak, the pith of her power. It is of no avail to say—and we, being ourselves of an ancient family, as poor as the old dark denizens of the soil who were displaced by the Norwegian brown species, despise the taunt—that fifteen out of the whole number of Linton lairds were, at one period, on the poor's box. Gentry, with old noble blood in their veins, are not a whit less to be valued that they are beggars, for it is the peculiar character of gentle blood, that it never gets thinner by poor meat. A low marriage sometimes deteriorates it; and hence the horror of the privileged species at that kind of degradation; but the tenth cousin of a scurvy baronet will retain the purity of the noble fluid, in spite of husks, acorns, and onions. All the efforts of the patriots called radicals—even if they should have recourse to the starving system, by taking the properties of their masters—will never be able to bring down to a proper popular equal consistency the blood of the old stock; and so long as they dare not, for the spilling of their own thin stuff, *let out* the life stream of their lords, they must submit to see it running in the old channels as

ruby and routhy as it did in the reign of Malcolm Canmore.

But you may say that Laird Geddes of Cauldshouthers was no Linton laird, and was never on the poor's box. Take it as you please, we will not dispute with you if you come from Tweeddale. You are, perhaps, of the old Hamiltons of Cauldcoats, or the Bertrams of Duckpool, or the Hays of Glenmuck, or the old tory lairds of Bogend, Hallmyre, or Windylaws, and may challenge us, like a true knight, for endeavouring to reduce the grandeur of your compeers; and therefore, to keep peace, we will be contented with the admission that Gilbert Geddes was the thane, or, as Miss Joanna Baillie would have it, according to the distinction indicated in the line, "the *thanics* drinking in the hall," the thanie—that is, the lesser Thane of Cauldshouthers, in the shire of Peebles. True, there was in that county, properly only one thane, viz., he of Drumelzier, whose castle, now in ruins, may still be seen near Powsail; but of the lesser order there were many; and, if any gutter-blooded burgher of Linton had, in his cups at Cantswalls, alleged anything to the contrary, he might have been set down as a leveller. The property of Cauldshouthers was of that kind comprehending a mixture of bog, mire, and moss, which is indicated by its name. Indeed, almost all the estates in that shire bore names no less appropriate; and, though some proprietors, such as Montgomerie, Veitch, Keith, and Kennedy, have endeavoured to impart a gentility to their possessions by re-christening them, they did so, we shrewdly suspect, to conceal the fact that they were new comers, and not of the noble old Hallmyres, Bogends, Blairbogs, and Cauldcoats. Not so, however, Gilbert Geddes, for the laird was of the good ancient stock of Cauldshouthers, and gloried in the name as he did in the old blood that had come down through honourable veins, unadulterated and unobstructed—save

probably by a partial congelation, the effect of the cold barren lands—until it landed, with an accumulation of dignity, in his own arteries, and those of his sister, Miss Grizelda.

Nothing in the world could have been more natural than that one of so old a family should endeavour to keep up the stock by marriage; yet it was true, and as lamentable as true, that Mr. Gilbert had not been able—though the fiftieth summer had shone on Cauldshouthers since he was born in the old house—to get matters so arranged as to place himself within the noose in a manner befitting his dignity. Somehow or another, the other proprietors around, such as Bogend and Glenmuck, pretended to discover that their blood was thicker than that of the Geddeses, and not a scion of their stocks would they allow to be engrafted on the good old oak of Cauldshouthers. It is, however, an old saying, that fortune favours the brave in marriage as in war, and the adage seemed fair to be realized, for, one day, the laird came from Linton a walking omen of prospective success, and the very first words he said to his sister Grizelda boded good.

"Ken ye the dame Shirley, wha lives at the east end o' Linton?" said he, as he sat down on the big oak chair in the mansion of Cauldshouthers.

"Better than you do, Gilbert," rejoined the sister. "Her maiden name is Bertram; but wha her husband was is no easy tauld. They say he was a captain in England, but I canna say she has ony o' the dignity o' a captain's widow. Report says naething in her favour, unless it be that she's a descendant o' the Bertrams o' Duckpool."

"Ah, Grizel!" ejaculated Gilbert, "if ye could mak out that pedigree, a' her fauts would be easily covered, especially with the help of the five thousand she has got left her by a cotton-spinner in St. Mungo's. Ye maun try and

mak out the pedigree, Grizel. Set about it, woman; mair depends on't than ye wot."

"What depends on't?" replied the sister.

"Maybe the junction o' the twa ancient families," rejoined he.

"Are ye serious, brother?" said Grizel, as she stroked down her boddice, and sat as upright as the dignity of the family of Cauldshouthers required.

"Indeed am I," rejoined the laird. "I want to be about with Bogend and Glenmuck, who refused me their dochters. Ken ye the antiquity o' the Bertrams?"

"Brawly," was the reply of the stiff Grizelda. "They count as far back as the fifth James, who, passing through Tweeddale, was determined to pay nae court to the Thane of Drumelzier; and yet he couldna mak his way—in a country where hill rides upon hill, and moss joins moss, frae Tweedscross to the Cauldstane-slap—without some assistance, the mair by note that he stuck in the mire, and might have been there yet, had it no been for Jock Bertram, a hind, who got the royal traveller and his men out, and led them through the thane's lands, to Glenwhappen. John got the mire whar the king stuck, which was called Duckpool, as a free gift to him and his heirs. But we o' Cauldshouthers are aulder, I ween, than even that, and we maun keep up our dignity."

"So we maun, Grizel; but you've forgot the best part o' the story, how the Thane o' Drumelzier having heard that a stranger had passed through his lands without paying him homage, rode with his men, mounted on white horses, after the rebels, and cam up with them just as the king was carousing after his journey. The thane, I wot, was sune on his knees. But we're aff the pin o' the wheel, Girz. The question is, could the family o' Geddes o' Cauldshouthers stand the shock o' a marriage wi' a doubtfu' descendant o' Jock Bertram, with five thousand in her pouch?"

"We're sae *very, very* ancient, ye see Gib," replied the sister, as she looked meditatingly, and twirled her two thumbs at the end of her rigid arms. "Indeed, we're a'thegither lost in mist, and, for aught we ken, we may be as auld as the Hunters o' Polmood, wha got a grant o' the twa Hopes frae Malcolm Canmore. Duckpool is a mere bairn to Cauldshouthers, and this woman mayna be a real Bertram after a'. There were English Bertrams, ye ken—Bertram the Archer was o' them, and he followed the trade o' robbery."

"And what auld honourable family about the Borders ever got their lands in ony other way, Girz!" replied the brother.

"Nane, of course," rejoined Grizel; "but maybe Mrs. Shirley comes frae the real Bertrams, and five thousand might be laid out in draining the lands. Nae doubt she wad jump at ye, Gib!"

"That makes me laugh, Girz!" rejoined the brother. "The legatee o' a cotton-spinner jump at the Laird o' Cauldshouthers! Ay, if he wad stoop to let her—that's the question, sister; and there's nae other, for I was wi' the dame this very day, within an hour after Rory Flayem, the Linton writer, gave me the hint o' her gude fortune. I cam on her wi' a' the force o' the dignity o' our family, and the very name o' our lands made her shiver in tory veneration. She was thunderstruck at the honour."

"I dinna wonder at that," replied Grizel. "I mysel hae often wondered at the ancientness o' our house, and pity the silly fools wha change the names o' their properties. Ha, ha! I fancy if the Duke o' Argyle had been ane o' the auld Blairbogs, he wadna hae changed the name o' their auld inheritance to that o' 'The Whim.'"

"Na, faith he, Girz!"

"And, by my troth," continued the sister, "I think the guidwife o' Middlebie, wha bade us change Cauld-

shouthers to Blinkbonny, was a wee envious, and deserved a catechising for her pains."

"There's nae doubt o't," added the brother. "But we're aff the wire again, Girz. Is it really your honest opinion that our honour would stand the shock o' the connection wi' the Widow Shirley?"

"The Emperor o' Muscovy," replied the sister, with a toss of her head, "didna lose a jot o' his greatness by marrying the cottager. The eagles o' Glenholme stoop to pick up the stanechaffers and fatten on them; and, really, I think, a'thing considered, that Cauldshouthers might, without a bend o' the back, bear up a burgher."

"The practice is, at least, justified by the aristocracy," added Gilbert; "and, ye ken, that's enough for *us*. It wad tak a guid drap o' burgher bluid, and mair, I wot, if there's ony o' the Duckpool sap in't, to thin that o' the Geddeses."

"And even if our honour was a wee thing damaged," rejoined the sister, "that might be made up by our lands being changed frae bog to arable, though, I believe, the bog, after a', is the auldest soil o' the country. Even the sad fate o' Nichol Muschet didna a'thegither destroy the respectability o' the Bogha's. There's great ancientness in bogs, yet as there's a kind o' fashion now-a-days about arable, I wadna be against the change to a certain limited extent. Ye hae now my opinion on this important subject, Gilbert, and may act according to the dictates o' the high spirit o' our auld race."

The door opened, and Rory Flayem entered.

"Weel, hae ye made the inquiry?" said the laird. "Has Mrs. Shirley really got a legacy o' the five thousand?"

"I have seen the cotton-spinner's will!" replied the writer, "and there can be nae doubt of the legacy."

Why more?—Next day the spruce laird was rapping at the door of the widow heiress. He entered with the

cool dignity of his caste; and might have come out under the influence of the same cool prudence, had not his honourable blood been fired by the presence of one of those worthies already hinted at—a Linton laird—who could have been about nothing else in the world than trying to get a lift from off the poor's box, by the assistance of the Widow Shirley.

"Your servant, sir," said the Linton portioner; "I did not think you had been acquainted here. Ane might rather hae expected to hae seen you about Bogend or Glenmuck, where there are still some braw leddies to dispose of."

The remark was impertinent, doubtless, and horribly ill-timed, because Cauldshouthers had been rejected by Bogend, and he was here a suitor competing with one who desecrated the term he gloried in, and whom, along with the whole class of Linton lairds, he hated mortally, and he had a good right to hate them, for some of them with no more than ten pounds a-year, were still heritors, and not only heritors, but ancient heritors, not much less ancient than the Geddeses themselves, so that they were a species of mock aristocrats, coming yet so near the real ones in the very attributes which the latter arrogated to themselves, that it required an effort of the mind to distinguish the real from the false. But Mr. Gilbert admitted of no such dubiety, and marked the difference decidedly and effectually. He did not return the Linton aristocrat an answer, but, drawing himself up, turned to the window as if to survey his competitor's estate, which consisted of a rood or two of arable land, and to wait till the latter took his hat. The Linton aristocrat very soon left the room; and however unimportant this slight event may appear, it was in fact decisive of the higher aristocrat's fate, for the blood of the Geddeses was up, and the heat of tory blood is a condition of the precious fluid not to be laughed at.

"Ye'll hae nae want o' thae sma' heritor creatures after

ye, dame," said he, as he condescended to sit down by the blushing widow.

"Yes," answered she, with great simplicity. "Fortune, Mr. Geddes, brings friends, or, at least, would-be friends, and one who has few relations requires to be on her guard."

"It is everything in thae matters," said the proprietor, "to look to respectability and station. Thae Linton bodies ca' themselves lairds, because they are proprietors o' about as muckle ground as would mak guid roomy graves to them. A real laird is something very different. And it's a pity when it becomes necessary that *we* should shew them the difference."

"Ah, you are of an ancient and honourable family, Mr. Geddes," said the widow. "Cauldshouthers is a name as familiar to me as Oliver Castle, or Drochel, or Neidpath, or Drumelzier."

"I see ye hae a proper estimate o' the degrees o' dignity, dame," said he; "and, doubtless, ye'll mak the better use o' the fortune that has been left ye; but I could expect naething less frae ane o' the Duckpools. I'm thinking ye're o' the right Bertrams."

"Yes," replied she; "and then my husband was descended from the Shirleys, Earl Ferrars, and Baron Ferrars of Chartley. His arms were the same as the Beauchamps, at least he used to say so. What are your's, Mr. Geddes?"

"Maybe ye dinna ken heraldry, dame!" replied the laird. "Our arms are vert, *three peat hags*, argent—the maist ancient o' the bearings in Tweeddale; as, indeed, may be evinced frae the description—peat land being clearly the original soil. Would it no be lamentable to think that sae ancient a family should end in my person."

"It is in your own power to prevent that, Mr. Geddes!" answered she.

"Say rather in your power, dame Shirley!" rejoined he, determined to cut out the Linton heritor by one bold stroke.

"O Mr. Geddes!" sighed the widow, holding her head at the proper angle of *naïveté*.

"Nae wonder that she's owrepowered by the honour," muttered the suitor, as he took breath to finish what he had so resolutely begun. "I am serious, madam," he continued. "To be plain wi' ye, and come to the point at ance, I want a mistress to Cauldshouthers; and you are the individual wham I hae selected to do the honours o' that important situation."

"Oh—O Mr. Geddes!" again cried the dame. "You have *such* a winning way of wooing!"

"I fancy there canna be the slightest breath o' objection," again said he, in his consciousness of having ennobled her in an instant by the mere hint of the honour.

"She would be a bold woman, besides a fool, that would reject so good an offer," replied she, burying her face in a napkin.

"That she would," rejoined Gilbert—"baith bauld and an idiot; and now, since ye hae received the honour wi' suitable modesty and gratitude, there is just ae condition that I wad like satisfied; and that is, that ye wad do your best to support the dignity o' the station to which you are to be elevated. Your ain pedigree, ye see, is at best but a dubious concern; and, therefore, it will require a' your efforts to comport yoursel in such a way as to accord suitably wi' the forms and punctilios o' aristocracy. It is just as weel, by the by, that ye hae few relatives; because, while the honour o' our ancient house may retain its character, in spite o' a match maybe in nae sma' degree below it, it might become a very different affair in the case o' a multitude o' puir beggarly relations."

"I am nearly the last of my race, Mr. Geddes," replied

she. "Is it not strange that we should be so very like each other?"

"Ay, in *that* particular respect," added the laird, as a salvo of their inequality.

And, after some farther concerted arrangements, the heritor left his affianced, and proceeded to Cauldshouthers, to report to Grizelda what he had achieved. In a short time, accordingly, the marriage was solemnized; and a very suitable display was made in the mansion of Cauldshouthers, where there were invited many of the neighbouring aristocrats. There were the Bogends, and the Hallmyres, and the Glenmucks, and others, some of whom, though they had asserted a superiority over the Geddeses, and turned up their noses at the match with a burgher widow with five thousand pounds, made by the vulgar operation of cotton-spinning, yet could not refuse the boon of their presence at the wedding of one of their own sect of exclusives. Miss Grizelda acted as mistress of the ceremonies, and contrived, by proper training, to make the bride go through the aristocratic drill with much eclat. She had correct opinions, as well as good practice, in this department. It is only the degenerate modern town-elite, among the exclusives, who pretend that *easiness* of manners —meaning thereby the total absence of all dignified *stiffness*—is the true test of aristocratic breeding. The older and truer stock of the country—such as the Geddeses—despise this beggarly town-born maxim: with them nothing can be too stiff; buckram-attitudes and dresses are the very staple of their calling. And why not? Any graceful snab or snip, of good spirits, when freed from the stool or board, may be as free and frisky as a kitten; but to carry out a legitimate and consistent stiffness of the godlike machine with an according costiveness of speech and loftiness of sentiment, can belong only to those who have been born great; and so, to be sure, these were the maxims on which

Grizelda acted in qualifying the bride to appear in a becoming manner before the Tweeddale grandees. Everything went off well. The dame was given out as a Duckpool; and it must have been fairly admitted, even by the proud Bogends, that she could not have acted her part better though she had been in reality descended from that house, so favoured by the fifth James, at the very time that he brought Drumelzier to his knees at Glenwhappen.

And it may thus be augured, that the Thane of Cauldshouthers was satisfied. The manners imparted to Mrs. Geddes by the sister, seemed to adhere to her; and though the Glenmucks alleged that her dignified rigidity was nothing but burgher awkwardness, it was not believed by those who knew that gentle blood hath in it some seeds of spleen.

"She performs her pairt wi' native dignity," was Gilbert's opinion expressed to his sister; "and seems to feel as if she had been born to sustain the important character she has to play, as the wife o' ane o' the auldest heritors o' Tweeddale. But ye maun keep at her, Girz; and, while you are improving her, I'll be busy with the bogs. We'll mak a' arable that will be arable."

And straightway, accordingly, he set about disposing of a part of his wife's tocher, in planting, and draining, and hedging, and ditching, with a view to impart some heat to Cauldshouthers, in return for the warmth which the fleeces of coarse wool had yielded to him and others. Meanwhile, the training within doors went on. Tea-parties were good discipline; and at one of these, the mistress of Bogend and her two daughters, and the mistress of Hallmyre and her daughter and nephew, and a number of others, witnessed the improvement of their new married neighbour. Pedigrees were always the favourite topic at Cauldshouthers.

"I maun hae Mrs Geddes's reduced to paper," said the

laird, "for the satisfaction o' ye a'. I like a tree—there's a certainty about it that defies a' envy. There's few o' us, I wot, that can count sae far back as the Bertrams."

"Mrs. Geddes might tell us off hand," said the mistress of Bogend, piqued of course. "I could gie the Bogends from the first to the last."

"And I hae a' the Ha'myres on my tongue's end," said she of that old family.

"And I could gie the Geddeses, stock and stem," added Grizelda.

"But it doesna follow that Mrs. Geddes has just the same extent o' memory," said the laird, as a cover to his half-marrow.

"Indeed, my memory is very poor on family descents," said the wife; "and there is now none of our family left to assist my recollections."

"Ah, Janet," cried a voice from the door, which had opened in the meantime and let in a stout huckster-looking dame and two children. "I am right glad to see you sae weel settled," she continued, as she bustled forward and seized the mistress of the house by the hand. "But it wasna friendly, it wasna like a sister, woman, no to write and tell me o' yer marriage. Heigh! but I am tired after that lang ride frae Glasgow. Sit down, childer; it's yer aunty's house, and, by my faith, it's nae sma affair; but oh, it has an awfu name."

The speaker had it all to herself, save for a whisper from the lady of Bogend, who asked her of Hallmyres if this would be another of the Duckpools. The others were dumb from amazement; and the new-comer gloried in the silence.

"Wasna that a lucky affair—that siller left us by the cotton spinner?" she rattled forth with increasing volubility. "Be quiet, childer. Faith, lass, if we hadna got our legacy just in the nick as it were, our John, wha was only makin

six shillings a week at the heckling, wad hae gi'en up the ghaist a'thegither."

The laird was getting fidgetty, and looked round for the servant; Grizelda was still dumb; the Bogends and Hallmyres were all curiosity; and Mrs. Geddes looked as if she could not help it. All was still an open field for the speaker.

"But, dear me, lass," again cried the visiter, "we never heard o' Serjeant Shirley's death."

"If ye're ony friend o' Mrs. Geddes's," said the laird, recovering himself, "you had better step ben to the parlour, and she'll see you there."

"Ou, I'm brawly where I am, sir," replied she of St. Mungo's. "There's nae use for ceremony wi' friends. Ye'll be Janet's husband, I fancy? Keep aff the back o' yer uncle's chair, ye ill-mannered brat."

"There is a woman in the parlour wishes to see you, Mrs. Geddes," said the servant.

"What like is she?" cried the Glasgow friend. "Is she a weel-faured woman, wi' a bairn at her foot?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"Just bring her in here, then," continued the speaker. "It's our sister Betty. I asked her to meet me here the day, and she was to get a cast o' a cart as far as Linton. She was to hae brocht Saunders wi' her, but there's some great folk dead about Lithgow, and he's been sae thrang wi' their mournings that I fancy he couldna win."

"Are these your sisters, Mrs. Geddes?" said the lady of Bogend, who probably enjoyed secretly the perplexity around her.

"I can answer for mysel," replied the visiter; "and whether this be Betty or no, I'll soon tell ye;" and she rose to waddle to the door to satisfy the inquiry of the lady of Bogend. "The truth is, madam," she said, by

way of favoured intelligence, as she passed the chair of the latter, "we're a' sisters; but, if we had been on the richt side o' the blanket—ye ken what I mean, if our faither and mither had been married—the siller left us by our uncle the cotton-spinner wad hae been twice as muckle. Is that you, Betty?" she bawled at the door. "Come in, woman."

"Save us!—save us!—the honour o' the Geddeses is gane for ever," groaned Gilbert.

"It's just me, Peggy," responded another voice from the passage; and the heavy tread of a weary traveller, mixed with the cries of a child, announced an approach. The two entered. The woman was dressed like the wife of a man of her husband's profession, who had got a recent legacy.

"Saunders is coming, after a'," cried Betty, as she entered. "He got done with the mournings on Wednesday. He's in the public-house, alang the road there, taking a dram wi' a friend, and will be here immediately. John, I fancy, couldna win. Ye're weel set doon, Janet," she continued, as she stood and stared at the room, turning round and round. "My troth, lass, ye hae fa'n on yer feet at last. It was just as weel the sergeant de'ed. Sit ye there, Geordie, and see if ye can learn manners enough to haud yer tongue."

The little cousins, Geordie, Johnny, and Jessie, entered instantly into a' clattering of friendly recognizances; and the two mothers bustled forward to chairs alongside of their sister, the lady of the house, whose colour had come and gone twenty times, and all power of speech had been taken away from her by a discovery as sudden as it was unpleasant. Yet what was to be done? Was the aristocratic Grizelda to sit and see tea filled out for the wives and weans of a dresser of yarns, and an artificer of garments? Was the honour of the Geddeses of Cauldshouthers to be scuttled

by a needle and a hackle-tooth? But matters were not destined to remain even upon the poise of these pivots. The little nephew of Hallmyres, annoyed by the burgher-bairns, struck one of them a blow in the face, which the spruce scion of the Lithgow tailor returned with far more gallantry than might have been expected from one of his degenerate caste. The cousin Johnny took the part of his relative; and matters were fast progressing towards hostilities, when the lady of Hallmyres rose to quell the incipient affair.

"Aff hands, my woman," cried Peggy, suddenly leaving her chair.

"Ay, ay," added Betty, "we hae at least a right to civility in the house o' our sister. We come kindly and friendly, as may be seen frae what's in my bundle—a gude bacon ham, and a gude cassimir waistcoat, sewed by Saunders' ain hands, for the guidman o' Cauldshouthers; and a' we want is something like friendliness in return. Just let the bairns alane. They'll gree fine when better acquaint."

"Mrs. Geddes," said Grizelda, with a puckered face and a starched manner, "ye'll better tak yer friends ben the house."

"Awa wi' them!" added the laird. "We maun hae a reckoning about a' this."

"There's no the sma'est occasion for't," responded Betty. "The bairns will agree fine. Just let them play themselves while we're taking our tea. Saunders will be here immediately."

"A guid advice," added Peggy; "but wha are our friends, Janet? Canna ye speak, woman? This will be Mr. Geddes, my brither-in-law, I fancy; and this will be Girzie, my gude-sister; but as for the ithers, I ken nae mair about them than I do o' the brothers and sisters o' the sergeant, wham I never saw."

"And here comes Saunders, at last," cried Betty, rising, and running to the window. "I will gang and let him in."

Bustling to the door, she executed her purpose, and straightway appeared again, ushering in, with a face that told her pride in her husband, a Crispinite, wonderfully *bien fait*, dressed in a suit of glossy black, clean shaven, and as pale as any sprig of nobility.

"Mr. Geddes, I presume," said he, rubbing his hands, which retained the marks of the needle, if not the dye of the mournings.

"Here's a chair for ye, Saunders," cried Betty. "Ye'll no be caring for tea, after the gill ye had wi' yer auld foreman, at the sign o' the 'Harrow,' yonder. Had ye ony mair after I left ye? I'm no sure about yer e'e. There's mair glamour in't than there should be. Sit ye down, and I'll bring the bundle with the ham and the waistcoat."

Grizelda held up her hands in amazement.

"For the love o' heaven, leave us, good leddies," she said to her friends.

"Oh ay," added the laird, "leave us, leave us, for mercy's sake."

"You have got into a duckpool," whispered the lady of Hallmyres, as she rose, followed by the others; "and I wish you fair out of it. Good by—good by."

# BON GUALTIER'S TALES.

## COUNTRY QUARTERS.

A PLEASANTER little town than Potterwell does not exist in that part of her Majesty's dominions called Scotland. On one side, the hand of cultivation has covered a genial soil with richness and fertility. The stately mansion, "bosomed high in tufted trees," occasionally invites the eye, as it wanders over the landscape; while here and there, the river Wimpledown may be seen peeping out amid the luxuriant verdure of wood and plain, and seeming to concentrate on itself all the radiance of any little sunshine that may be going. On the other side, again, are nothing but impracticable mountains—fine bluff old fellows—that evidently have an extensive and invincible contempt for Time, and, like other great ones of the earth, never carry any *change* about them. Look beyond these, and the prospect is indeed a fine one—a little monotonous, perhaps, but still a fine one—peak receding behind peak in endless series, a multitudinous sea of mountain tops, with noses as blue as a disappointed man's face, or Miss Harriet Martineau's stockings.

With a situation presenting such allurements for the devotees of the picturesque, is it wonderful that Potterwell became a favourite resort? By the best of good fortune, too, a spring, close by, of a peculiarly nauseous character, had, a few years before the period we write of, attracted attention by throwing into violent convulsions sundry cows that had been so far left to themselves as to drink of it,

besides carrying off an occasional little boy or so, as a sort of just retribution for so far suppressing his natural tastes as to admit it within his lips. Dr. Scammony, however, had taken the mineral water under his patronage; and his celebrated pamphlet upon the medicinal properties of the Potterwell Mephitic Assafœtida Waters at once fixed their reputation, while it materially augmented his own. A general subscription was projected, with a view to the erection of a pump-room. The plan took amazingly; and, from being left to work its way out, as best it might, through the diseased and miserable weeds with which it was overgrown, the spring all at once found itself established in a handsome apartment, fitted up with a most benevolent attention to the wants of such persons as might repair thither with the probable chance—however little they might be conscious of the fact—of dying by a watery death.

It was a bright sparkling morning in August, and there was an exhilarating freshness in the air, that caused the heart to leap up, and make the spirit as unclouded as the blue sky overhead. The pump-room was thronged, and every one congratulated his neighbour on the beauty of the morning.

"At your post as usual, Stukeley!" said a smartly-dressed young man, stepping up to Mr. Stukeley—a well-known frequenter of the wells since their first celebrity—and shaking him warmly by the hand. "I do believe you are retained as a check upon the pump woman, that you keep such a strict look out after her customers. How many doses has she administered to-day? Come now, out with your note-book, and let me see."

"Oh, my dear Frank, if you really want to know, I am the man for you—Old Cotton of Dundee, four and a-half, and his daughter took off the balance of the six. What do you think I heard him whisper to her?—'Hoot, lassie,

tak it aff, it's a' paid for;' and she, poor soul, was forced to gulp it down, that he might have the satisfaction of knowing that full value had been given for his penny. Then there was Runrig the farmer from Mid-Lothian, half-a-dozen; the man has a frame of iron, and a cheek as fresh as new-mown hay; but somebody had told him the water would do him good, and he has accordingly taken enough to make him ill for a fortnight. Then, there was Deacon Dobie's rich widow—fat, fair, and forty—she got pretty well through the seventh tumbler; but, it's a way with her, when she begins drinking, not to know when to stop; which, by the way, may account for her having been, for some time, as she elegantly expresses it, 'gey an nervish ways, whiles.' After her came"——And Stukeley was going on to enumerate the different visiters of the morning, checking them off upon his fingers as he proceeded, when his friend, Frank Preston, stopped him.

"For Heaven's sake, have done; and tell me, if you can, who those two fops of fellows are at the foot of the room? They only came a week ago; and, though nobody knows who they are, they have made the acquaintance of half the people here."

"I see nothing very odd in that. I know nothing of the men; but they dress well, and are moderately good-looking, and have just sufficient assurance to pass off upon the uninitiated for ease of manner and fashionable breeding. A pair of parvenus, no doubt; but what is your motive for asking so particularly about them?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing! Only, I am to meet them at the Cheeshams to-night, and I wished to know something of them."

"So, so! sets the wind in that quarter? A rival, Master Frank? It is there the shoe pinches, is it?"

"A rival—nonsense! What should I care whether the puppies are attentive to Emily Cheesham or not?"

"Why more to her than to her sister Fanny? I mentioned no names. Ha! Master Frank, you see I have caught you. Come, come, tell me what it is annoys you?"

"Well," stammered out Frank Preston,—"well, the fact is—the fact is, one of them has been rather particular in his attentions to Emily, and I am half-inclined to think she gives him encouragement."

"And, suppose she does, I see nothing in that but the harmless vanity of a girl, pleased to have another dangler under her spell."

"That is all very well, but I don't like it a bit. It may be so, and it may not. Her encouragement to him is very marked, and I don't feel easy under it at all, I don't."

"Why, Frank, you must both have a very poor opinion of Miss Emily, and be especially soft yourself, to give yourself any concern in the matter. If you have deemed her worthy of your regards, and she has given you warrant for thinking you have a claim upon them, and yet she now throws you off to make way for this newer lover, your course is a clear one. Turn from her at once, and fortify yourself with old Withers' lines—

> 'If she be not made for me
> What care I for whom she be.'"

"Excellent philosophy, if one could but act upon it. But what annoys me about the business is, that I am sure these fellows are a pair of snobs, and are playing themselves off for something greater than they are."

"Very possibly; but that is just a stronger reason for taking my advice. If Miss Emily can be gratified with the attentions of such persons, leave her to the full enjoyment of them. Don't make yourself miserable for her folly."

"Oh, I don't make myself miserable at all, not in the least; only, I should like to find out who the fellows are."

The young men, of whom Preston and Stukeley had been speaking, and who now lounged up the room, describing semicircles with their legs at every step they took, were certainly never meant for the ordinary tear and wear of the hard-working every-day world. Their dress had too fine a gloss upon it for that, their hair much too gracefully disposed. They were both rather below the middle size, both dark in the complexion, but one of them much more so than the other. The darker slip of humanity had cultivated the growth of his hair with singular success. It fell away in masses from his forehead and temples, and curled, like the rings of the young vine, over the velvet collar that capped a coat of symmetrical proportions. Circling round the cheeks, and below the chin, it somewhat obtruded upon the space which is generally occupied by the face, so that his head might truly be said to be a mass of hair, slightly interspersed with features. His friend, again, to avoid monotony, had varied the style of his upper works, and his locks were allowed to droop in long, lanky, melancholy tangles down his sallow cheeks; while, perched upon either lip, might be seen a feathery-looking object, not to be accounted for, but on the supposition that it was intended to seduce the public into a belief of its being a moustache. Both were showily dressed. Both had stocks terminating in a cataract of satin that emptied itself into tartan velvet waistcoats, worn probably in honour of the country; both had gold chains innumerable, twisting in a multiplicity of convolutions across these waistcoats; both had on yellow kid gloves of unimpeachable purity, and both carried minute canes of imitation ebony, with which, at intervals, they flogged, one the right and the other the left leg, with the most painful ferocity. They were a noble pair; alike, yet, oh, how different!

"Eugene, my boy," said the darker of the two, in a tone of voice loud enough to let half the room hear the interest-

ing communication, "we must see what sort of stuff this here water is—we must, positively."

"Roost eggs, Adolph, whisked in bilge-water, with a rusty tenpenny nail. Faugh! I'm smashed if I taste it."

"Not so bad that for you," returned Adolph, smiling faintly; "but you must really pay your respects to the waters."

"'Pon my soul, I shawn't. I had enough of that so't of thing in Jummany, the time I was ova with Ned Hoxham."

"That was the time, wasn't it, that you brought me over that choice lot of cigaws?"

"I believe it was," responded Eugene, with the most impressive indifference, as if he wished it to be understood that he had been so often there that he could not recall the particulars of any one visit.

"I know something of Seidlitz and Seltzer myself," resumed the darker Adonis, "and Soda water too, by Jove, for that matter, and they're not bad things either, when one's been making a night of it, so I'll have a try at this Potterwell fluid, and see how it does for a change."

In this manner the two friends proceeded, to the infinite enlightenment of those about them, who, being greatly struck with their easy and facetious manners, stood admiringly by with looks of evident delight! The young men saw the impression they were making, and, desirous of keeping it up, went on to ask the priestess of the spring, how often, and in what quantities she found it necessary to doctor it with Glauber salts, brimstone, and assafœtida. The joke took immensely. Such of the bystanders as could laugh—for the internal agitation produced by the cathartic properties of their morning draught, made that a somewhat difficult and dangerous experiment—did so; and various young men, of no very definite character, but who seemed to support the disguise of gentlemen with considerable pain

to themselves, sidled up, and endeavoured to strike into conversation with our Nisus and Euryalus, thinking to share by contact the glory which they had won. All they got for their pains, however, was a stare of cool indifference. The friends were as great adepts in the art and mystery of *cutting*, as the most fashionable tailor could be; and, after volunteering a few ineffectual efforts at sprightliness, these awkward aspirants to fame were forced to fall back, abashed and crest-fallen, into the natural insignificance of their character.

These proceedings did not pass unnoticed by Preston and his elderly friend, who made their own observations upon them, but were prevented from saying anything on the subject to each other by the entrance of a party, which diverted their attention in a different direction. These were no other than Mrs. Cheesham and her two accomplished daughters, Miss Emily and Miss Fanny Cheesham. Mrs. Cheesham's personal appearance may be passed over very briefly; as no one, so far as is known, ever cared about it but herself. She was vain, vulgar, and affected; fond of finery and display; and the one dominant passion of her life was to insinuate herself and her family into fashionable society, and secure a brilliant match for her daughters. They, again, were a pair of attractive showy girls; Emily flippant, sparkling, lively; Fanny, demure, reserved, and cold. Emily's eyes were dark and lustrous—you saw the best of them at once; and her look, alert and wicked. These corresponded well with a well-rounded figure, a rosy complexion, and full pouting lips, that were "ruddier than the cherry." Fanny was tall and "stately in her going;" pale, but without that look of sickliness which generally accompanies such a complexion, and her eyes, beautiful as they were when brought into play, were generally shrouded by the drooping of her eyelids, like those of one who is accustomed to be frequently self-inwrapt. With Emily

you might sport in jest and raillery by the hour; but with Fanny you always felt, as it were, bound to be upon your best behaviour. They passed up the room, distributing nods of recognition, and occasionally stopping to allow Mrs. Cheesham to give her invitations to a *soirée musicale* which she intended to get up that evening.

"Your servant, ladies," said old Stukeley, raising his hat, while his friend followed his example. "You are late. I was afraid we were not to have the pleasure of seeing you this morning. Pray, Miss Emily, what new novel or poem was it that kept you awake so late last night that you have lost half this glorious morning? Tell me the author's name, that I may punish the delinquent, by cutting up his book, in the next number of our review?"

"Cut it up, and you will do more than I could; for I found myself nodding over the second page, and I feel the drowsiness about me still."

"The opiate—the opiate, Miss Emily? Who was its compounder? He must be a charmer indeed."

"Himself and his printer knows. Only some unhappy bard, who dubs us women 'The angels of life,' and misuses us vilely through a dozen cantos of halting verse. The poor man has forgot the story

> 'Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world and all our woe,'

or he would have christened us daughters of Eve by a very different name."

"O you little rogue! you are too hard upon this devotee to your dear deluding sex. It is only his excess of politeness that has made him forget his historical reading."

"His politeness! Fiddlestick! I would as soon have a troop of boys inflict the intolerable tediousness of their calf-love upon me as endure the rhapsodies of a booby,

who strips us of our good flesh and blood, frailties and all, to etherealize us into an incomprehensible compound of tears, sighs, moonshine, music, love, flowers, and hysterics."

"Emily, how you run on!" broke in Mrs. Cheesham. "My dear Mr. Stukeley, really you must not encourage the girl in her nonsense. I declare, I sometimes think her tongue runs away with her wits."

"Better that, I'm sure, madam, than have it run away without them," responded Stukeley, in a deprecating tone, which threw Mrs. Cheesham, whose intellect was none of the acutest, completely out.

"Girls, there are Mr. Blowze and Mr. Lilylipz," said Mrs. Cheesham, looking in the direction of the friends, Adolph and Eugene; "you had better arrange with them about coming this evening."

Emily advanced, with her sister, to the engaging pair, who received them with that peculiar contortion of the body, between a jerk and a shuffle, which young men are in the habit of mistaking for a bow, and was soon deep in the heart of a flirtation with Adolph, while Fanny stood listening to the vapid nothings of Eugene, a very model of passive endurance. Frank Preston was anything but an easy spectator of this movement; nor was Emily blind to this; but, like a wilful woman, she could not forbear playing the petty tyrant, and exercising freely the power to torment which she saw that she possessed.

"You will be of our party to-night, gentlemen," continued Mrs. Cheesham. "We are to have a little music. You are fond of music, Mr. Stukeley, I know; and no pressing can be necessary to an ama*toor* like you, Mr. Francis. I can assure you, you'll meet some very nice people. Mr. and Mrs. M'Skrattachan, highly respectable people—an old Highland family, and with very high connections. Mr. M'Skrattachan's mother's sister's aunt —no, his aunt's mother's sister—yes, that was it—Mr.

M'Skrattachan's aunt's mother's sister; and yet I don't know—I dare say I was right before—at all events, it was one or other of them—married a second cousin—something of that kind—of the Duke of Argyle, by the mother's side. They had a large estate in Skye or Ross-shire—I am not sure which, but it was somewhere thereabout."

Stukeley and Preston were glad to cover their retreat by acceptance of Mrs. Cheesham's invitation; and, leaving her to empty the dregs of the details which she had begun into the willing ears of some of her more submissive friends, they made their escape from the pumproom.

Slopbole Cottage, where the Cheesham's were domiciliated during their sojourn at Potterwell, was situated upon the banks of the Wimpledown, at a distance of somewhat less than a quarter of a mile from the burgh. It had, at one time, been a farm-house; but, within a few years, it had been recast: and, by the addition of a bow window, a trellised door, and a few of the usual et ceteras, it had been converted into what is by courtesy termed a cottage ornée. It was an agreeable place, for all that, shaded by the remnants of a fine old wood—the rustling of whose foliage made pleasant music, as it blended with the ever-sounding plash and rushing of the stream.

When Frank Preston arrived at Slopbole Cottage that evening, he found the drawing-room already well stocked with the usual components of a tea-party. The two exquisites of the morning he saw, to his dismay, were already there. Adolph was assiduously sacrificing to the charms and wit of Miss Emily, while his shadow, Eugene, was—but Preston did not care about that—as much engaged in Macadamising his great conceptions into small talk suitable for the intellectual capacity of Miss Fanny. Mrs. Cheesham regarded these proceedings with entire satisfaction. The friends, to her mind, were men of birth, fashion, and fortune, and the very men for her daughters. Besides, there

was a mystery about them that was charming. Nobody knew exactly who they were, although everybody was sure they were somebody. None but great people ever travel *incog.* They were evidently struck by her daughters. Things were in a fair train; and, if she could but make a match of it, Mrs. Cheesham thought she might then fold her hands across, and make herself easy for life. Her daughters would be the wives of great men, and she was their mother, and every one knows what an important personage a wife's mother is.

"Two very fine young men, Mr. Francis," said Mrs. Cheesham. "Extremely intelligent people. And so good looking! Quite *distingue*, too. It is not every day one meets such people."

Frank Preston threw in the necessary quantity of "yes's," "certainly's," and so forth, while Mrs. Cheesham continued—

"They seem rather taken with my girls, don't they? Mr. Blowze is never away from Emily's side. His attentions are quite marked. Don't you think, now, they'd make a nice pair? They're both so lively—always saying such clever things. I never knew Emily so smart either; but that girl's all animation—all spirits. I always said Emily would never do but for a rattle of a husband—a man that could talk as much as herself. It does not do, you know, really it does not do for the wife to have too much of the talk to herself. I make that a principle; and, as I often tell Cheesham, I let him have it all his own way, rather than argue a point with him."

This was, of course, an exceedingly agreeable strain of conversation to the lover, to whom it was no small relief, when Mrs. Cheesham quitted his side to single out her musical friends for the performance of a quartette. At her summons, these parties were seen to emerge from the various recesses where they had been concealing themselves,

in all the majesty of silence, as is the way with musical amateurs in general. Miss Fanny, who was really an accomplished performer, was called to preside at the pianoforte, and Mr. Lilylipz rushed before to adjust the music-stool and turn over the leaves for her. Mr. Blewitt got out his flute, and, after screwing it together, commenced a series of blasts upon it, which were considered necessary to the process of tuning. Mr. Harrower, the violoncello player, turned up the wristbands of his coat, placed his handkerchief on his left knee, and, after a preliminary flourish or two of his hands, began to grind his violoncello into a proper sharpness of pitch. Not to be behind the rest, Mr. Fogle screwed his violin strings first up, and then he screwed them down, and then he proceeded to screw them up again, with a waywardness of purpose that might have been extremely diverting, if its effects had not been so very distressing to the ears. Having thus begot a due degree of attention in their audience, the performers thought of trying how the results of their respective preparations tallied.

"Miss Fanny, will you be kind enough to sound your A?" lisped Mr. Blewitt.

Miss Fanny did sound her A, and again a dissonance broke forth that would have thrown Orpheus into fits. It was then discovered that the damp had reduced the piano nearly a whole tone below pitch, and Mr. Blewitt's flute could not be brought down to a level with it by any contrivance. The musicians, however, were not to be baulked in their purpose for this, and they agreed to proceed with the flute some half a tone higher than the other instruments. But there was a world of preliminary work yet to be gone through; tables had to be adjusted, and books had to be built upon music stands. But the tables would not stand conveniently, and the books would fall, and then all the work of adjustment and library architecture had to

be gone over again. At last these matters were put to rights, and, after a few more indefinite vagaries by Messrs. Blewitt, Harrower, and Fogle, the junto made a dash into the heart of one of Haydn's quartetts. The piano kept steadily moving through the piece. Miss Fanny knew her work, and she did it. The others did not know theirs, and they *did for* it. After a few faint squeaks at the beginning, Mr. Blewitt's flute dropped out of hearing altogether, and, just as everybody had set it down as defunct, it began to give token of its existence by a wail or two rising through the storm of sounds with which the performance closed, and then made up its leeway by continuing to vapour away for some time after the rest had finished.

"Bless my heart, are you done?" cried Mr. Blewitt, breaking off in the middle of a solo, which he found himself performing to his own astonishment.

Mr. Harrower and Mr. Fogle threw up their eyes with an intensity of contempt that defies description. To be sure, neither of them had kept either time or tune all the way through. Mr. Harrower's violoncello had growled and groaned, at intervals, in a manner truly pitiable; and Mr. Fogle's bow had done nothing but dance and leap, in a perpetual staccato from the first bar to the last, to the entire confusion of both melody and concord. But they had both managed to be in at the death, and were therefore entitled to sneer at the unhappy flutist. Mr. Eugene Lilylipz, who had annoyed Miss Fanny throughout the performance, by invariably turning over the leaf at the wrong place, now broke into a volley of raptures, of which the words "Devaine" and "Chawming," were among the principal symbols. A buzz of approbation ran round the room, warm in proportion to the relief which the cessation of the Dutch concert afforded. Mr. Harrower and his coadjutors grew communicative, and vented an infinite quantity of the jargon of dilettanteism upon each other,

and upon those about them. They soon got into a discussion upon the merits of different composers, whose names served them to bandy to and fro in the battledore and shuttlecock of conversation. Beethoven was cried up to the seventh heaven by Mr. Harrower, for his grandeur and sublimity, and all that sort of thing.

"There is a Miltonic greatness about the man!" he exclaimed, throwing his eyes to the ceiling, in the contemplation of a visionary demigod. "A vastness, a massiveness, an incomprehensible—eh, eh?—ah, I can't exactly tell what, that places him far above all other writers."

"Every man to his taste," insinuated Mr. Blewitt; "but I certainly like what I can understand best. Now I don't understand Beethoven; but I *can* understand Mozart, or Weber, or Haydn."

"It is very well if you do!" retorted the violoncellist, reflecting probably on the recent specimen Mr. Blewitt had given of his powers. "It is more than everybody does, I can tell you."

"Od, gentlemen, but it's grand music onyhow, and exceeding justice you have done it, if I may speak my mind. But ye ken, I'm no great shakes of a judge."

This was the opinion volunteered by Mr. Cheesham, who saw the musicians were giving symptoms of that tendency to discord for which they are proverbial, and threw out a sop to their vanity, which at once restored them to order. As he said himself, Mr. Cheesham was no great judge of music, nor, indeed, of any of the fine arts. He had read little, and thought less; and yet, since he had become independent of the world, he was fond of assuming an air of knowledge, that was exceedingly amusing. There was nothing, for instance, that he liked better to be talking about than history; and, nevertheless, that Hannibal was killed at the battle of Drumclog, and Julius Cæsar beheaded by Henry the Eighth, were facts which he would

probably have had no hesitation in admitting, upon any reasonable representation.

By this time, Mr. Stukeley had joined the party, and was going his rounds, chatting, laughing, quizzing, and prosing, according to the different characters of the people whom he talked with. When he reached Mr. Cheesham, he found him in earnest conversation with Mr. Lilylipz, regarding the ruins of Tinglebury, an abbey not far from Potterwell, of which the architecture was pronounced, by Mr. Lilylipz, to be "*suttinly* transcandent beyond anythin*k*. It is of that pure Græco-Gothic, which was brought over by William the Conqueror, and went out with the Saxons."

Stukeley encouraged the conversation, drawing out the presumptuous ignorance of Mr. Lilylipz, and the rusty nomeanings of the parent Cheesham into strong relief.

"Gentlemen, excuse me for breaking up your *tete-a-tete*. Have you got upon 'Shakspeare, taste, and the musical glasses?'" said Miss Emily, joining the trio. "Mr. Lilylipz, your friend tells me you sing. Will you break the dullness, and favour us?"

"Oh, I never do sing; and, besides, I am suffering from hoarseness."

"Come, come," replied Miss Emily, "none of these excuses, or we shall expect to find a very Braham, at least."

"Now, *really*!" remonstrated Mr. Lilylipz.

"Oh, never mind his nonsense, Miss Cheesham," exclaimed Mr. Blowze, from the other side of the room. "Lilylipz sings an uncommonly good song, when he likes. Give us 'the Rose of Cashmere,' or 'She wore a wreath of Roses.' Come away, now—no humbug!"

"Oh, that will be delightful!—pray, do sing!" were the exclamations of a dozen voices, at least. "Mr. Lilylipz' song!" shouted the elderly gentlemen of the party; and, forthwith, an awful stillness reigned throughout the apart-

ment. Upon this, Mr. Lilylipz blew his nose, coughed thrice, and, throwing himself back in his chair, rivetted his eyes, with the utmost intensity, upon a corner of the ceiling. Every one held back his breath in expectation, and the interesting young man opened upon the assemblage with a ballad all about an Araby maid, to whom a Christian knight was submitting proposals of elopement, which the lady appeared to be by no means averse to, for each stanza ended with the refrain, "Away, away, away!" signifying that the parties meant to be off somewhere as fast as possible. Mr. Lilylipz had just concluded verse the first, and the "Away, away, away!" had powerfully excited the imagination of the young ladies present, when the door opened, and the clinking of crystal ware announced the inopportune entrance of a maidservant bearing a trayful of glasses filled with that vile imbroglio of hot water and sugar coloured with wine, which passes in genteel circles by the name of negus. All eyes turned towards the door, and Mrs. Cheesham exclaimed, "Sally, be quiet!" but Mr. Eugene was too much enrapt by his own performance to feel the disturbance, and he tore away through verse the second with kindling enthusiasm. "Away, away, away!" sang the vocalist, when a crash and a scream arrested his progress. The servant maid had dropped the tray, and the glasses were rolling to and fro upon the floor in a confusion of fragments, while the delinquent, Sally, shrieking at the top of her voice, was making her way out at the door with all the speed she was mistress of.

"What the devil's that?" cried one. "The careless slut!" screamed another. "Such thoughtlessness!" suggested a third. "What the deuce could the woman mean?" asked a fourth. "It's the last night she sets foot in my house!" exclaimed Mrs. Cheesham, thrown off her dignity by the sudden shock.

"Bless me, you look unwell!" said Mr. Cheesham to Mr.

Lilylipz, who had turned deadly pale, and was altogether looking excessively unhappy.

"Oh, it is nothing. Only a constitutional nervousness. The start, the surprise, that sort of thing, you know; but it will go off in a moment. I shall just take a turn in the air for a little, and I'll be quite better."

The ladies were engaged in the contemplation of the wreck at the other end of the room, and Mr. Lilylipz, accompanied by his friend, stepped out at one of the drawing-room windows, which opened out upon the lawn. Frank Preston looked after them, and saw them in the moonlight, passing down the banks of the river among the trees, apparently engaged in earnest conversation.

"What do you think of this business, eh?" said Stukeley, rousing him from a reverie, by a tap upon the shoulder. "Queerish a little, isn't it?"

"Queerish *not* a little, I think; and blow me if I don't get to the bottom of it, or the devil's in it. That girl knows something of Mr. Eugene, I'll be sworn. We must get out of her what it is."

"Oh, no doubt she does. It wasn't the song that threw her off, although it was certainly vile enough for anything; it was himself; that is as clear as day. Let us off, hunt out the wench, and get the secret from her."

They left the room by the open window, and passing round the house to the servants' entrance, walked into the kitchen, where they found Sally labouring under strong excitement, as she narrated the incident which had led to her precipitate retreat from the drawing-room.

"To think of seeing him here; the base deceitful wretch! Cocked up in the drawing-room, forsooth, as if that were a place for him or the likes of him. Set him up indeed—a pretty story. But I know'd as how he'd never come to no good!"

"Who is he, my dear?" inquired Stukeley.

"Who is he, sir!—who should he be but Tom Newlands, the son of Dame Newlands of our village."

"Oh, you must certainly be mistaken."

"Never a bit mistaken am I, sir. I have too good reason for remembering him, the wretch! Oh, if I had him here, I wouldn't give it him, I wouldn't? I'd sarve him out, the deludin' scoundrel. But he never was good for nothing since he went into the haberdashery line."

"A haberdasher, is he? Capital!—capital! The man of fashion, eh, Frank?"

"The young man of *distingue* appearance!"

"And who's his friend, Sally?"

"What! the other chap? Oh, I don't know anything about him, except that he's one of them man millinery fellows; and a precious bad lot they are, I know."

"Glorious!—glorious!" cried Stukeley, crying with delight, as he walked out of the place with his friend. Here's a discovery for some folks, isn't it? The brilliant alliance, the high family, et cetera, et cetera, all dwindled into a measurer of tapes. Aren't you proud of having had such a rival?"

"Oh, come, don't be too hard upon me on that point. Mum, here we are at the drawing-room again. Not a word of what we have heard. If these scamps have made themselves scarce, as I think they have, good and well. But, if they venture to shew face here again, I shall certainly feel it to be my dûty to pull their noses, and eject them from the premises by a summary process."

"Oh, never fear, they will not put you to the trouble. They are off for good and all, or I am no prophet."

Stukeley was right. The evening passed on, and the friends returned not. Infinite were the surmises which their absence occasioned, but the general conclusion was, that the interesting Mr. Lilylipz had found himself worse, and had retired to his inn for the night, along with his

faithful Achates. Morning came, but the friends did not make their appearance at the pumproom as usual. They were not at their inn; they were not in Potterwell. Whither they had wended, no one knew; but, like the characters in the ballad, which had been so oddly broken off, they were "away, away, away." They had come like shadows, and like shadows they had departed.

Some months afterwards, Mrs. Cheesham and her daughter Emily entered one of the extensive drapery warehouses of Edinburgh, to invest a portion of their capital in the purchase of a *mousseline de laine.* They had seen an advertisement which intimated that no lady ought, in justice to herself, to buy a dress of this description without first inspecting that company's stock of the article. They were determined to do themselves justice, and they went accordingly.

"Eugene," said the superintendent of the place, "shew these ladies that parcel of goods. A very superior article, indeed." Eugene! Eugene! the ladies had good reason to remember the name; and what was their surprise, on looking round, to see the exquisite of Potterwell bending under a load of dress pieces? If their surprise was great, infinitely greater was his dismay. His knees shook; his eyes grew dim; his head giddy. His hands lost their power, and, dropping the bundle, the unhappy Eugene stumbled over it in a manner painfully ignoble. Mrs. and Miss Cheesham turned to quit the shop, when there, behind them, stood the dashing Adolph. "The devil!" he exclaimed, and, ducking dexterously under the counter, disappeared among sundry bales that were piled beyond it. The lesson was not lost. Mrs. Cheesham had had quite enough of quality-hunting to satisfy her; and Miss Emily found out that it was desirable to be wise as well as witty, and gave her hand to Frank Preston, who forgave her temporary apostacy, not only because it had been smartly

punished by the result, but for the sake of the many estimable qualities which Miss Cheesham really possessed. Miss Fanny still roams, "in maiden meditation, fancy free," but she cannot do so long, or there is no skill in man. At all events, when she does want a husband, she will not go in search of him to COUNTRY QUARTERS.

# THE MONK OF ST. ANTHONY.

"When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be;
When the devil grew well, the devil a monk was he."

In that very ancient and very filthy quarter of the town of Leith, called the Coal Hill, there flourished, in days of yore, a certain hostelrie kept by one David Wemyss. This house, which was distinguished by the figure of a ship, carved in high relief in stone over the lintel of the door, was one of good repute, and much resorted to by the seafaring people who frequented the port.

But it was not alone the good cheer and reasonable charges, for both of which "The Ship" was remarkable, that brought so many customers to David Wemyss: for this patronage he was as much indebted to his own civil and obliging manner, as to the considerations just mentioned, although, doubtless, these had their due weight with all considerate and reflecting men.

With all David's civility of manner, however, there was thought to be a spice of the rogue in him; just the smallest thing possible; but it was a sort of good-humoured roguery. In the small trickery he practised, there was as much to laugh at as to deprecate; for, being a facetious sort of personage himself, everything he did—good, bad, and indifferent—had a touch, less or more, of this quality about it; so that he could hardly be said to have been liked a bit the less for his left-handed propensities; the more especially that these were never exhibited in his dealings with his guests or customers, to whom he always acted the part of an obliging and conscientious landlord.

He knew this to be for his interest, and therefore did he abide by it.

At the period at which our story opens, namely, the year 1559, the Reformation, if it had not yet driven papacy entirely out of the land, had, at least, compelled it to retire into holes and corners, and to avoid, as much as possible, the public eye. One of the last retreats of the denounced religion in its adversity, was the preceptory of St. Anthony, in Leith. For the protection, or rather endurance, which it found here, it was indebted to the circumstance of the town's being, in an especial manner, under the patronage of Mary of Guise or Lorraine, the mother of the unfortunate Scottish queen of that name.

Conceiving Leith to be, as it was, a convenient point from which to correspond with France, and well situated for the reception of such supplies as might be sent her from that country, to enable her to make head against her discontented nobles, Mary made the town, as it were, her own; and to identify herself still more closely with it, made it also, for some time, her place of residence.

To this circumstance, then, was it owing, that after they had almost wholly disappeared everywhere else, a few monks might still be seen moving stealthily and crest-fallen through the streets of Leith. These belonged to the preceptory of St. Anthony, which stood at the upper or western end of the long, tortuous street, called the Kirkgate.

But even from this, one of its last places of refuge, was prelacy now about to be driven. The town, at the particular period to which our tale refers, was besieged by the lords of the congregation, aided by an army of three thousand English, under Lord Gray of Wilton, who had been despatched for this purpose by Elizabeth, to whom the Reformers had appealed in their necessities.

The reader, then, will understand that he is in a be-

leaguered town: that he is in Leith during the famous siege of that ancient seaport; when it was invested on all sides by the enemies of prelacy, and against whom it was defended, chiefly by a body of French troops, under a general of the name of D'Oysel, who had been sent from France to aid the Queen Regent in maintaining her authority in the kingdom.

Having despatched these preliminaries, we proceed with our story.

It was on a certain evening in the latter end of April, or beginning of May, 1559, that mine host of "The Ship" was suddenly summoned from his cellar, at a moment when he was employed in tapping a new hogshead of claret, by a gentle rap at a quiet back door which stood just beside the hatchway that led to the cellar in question.

This door, which had been contrived, or struck out, for the accommodation of private and confidential customers, who did not care to be seen entering "The Ship" by the front door, was accessible only through a complicated labyrinth of mean buildings, on a spot still known by the name of the Peat Neuk, and so called, from its having been the public depository of that description of fuel, before coals came into the general use in which they now are, and have long been.

"Wha 's this?" muttered David Wemyss to himself, on hearing the gentle rap at the back door above spoken of, and, at the same time, laying down a bright tankard of claret, which he had just drawn from the newly broached hogshead. "Lang Willie Wilson, the herrin curer, I dare say, or the skipper o' the Cut-luggit Sow o' Kirkcaldy."

Thus conjecturing who his visiter might be, David Wemyss approached the door, undid its fastenings, and admitted, not Willie Wilson, the herring curer, nor the

Kirkcaldy skipper, but a certain worthy brother of the preceptory of St. Anthony, by name Peter Drinkhooly. Peter, who wore the dress of his order, namely, a loose, black cloth gown, had long been one of mine host of "The Ship's" private and confidential customers. He dearly loved a stoup of fresh claret; but both his character and calling compelled him to go cautiously about such carnal indulgences, and to trust no front doors with his secret.

Peter, however, although addicted to vinous propensities, was not what could be called a "jolly friar." He was rather a quiet, maudlin sort of a toper; neither boisterous in manner, nor reckless in disposition. He could, however, drink with the face of clay.

"Oh, father, is that you?" said David, on perceiving the black gown and slouched hat of his visiter. "I thocht it had been Willie Wilson, or the skipper. Stap awa in by there,"·pointing to the well-known sanctum of the back-door customers; "and I'll gie ye a tasting o' a fresh tap I was just at whan ye cam in."

Without saying a word in reply, Friar Drinkhooly glided into the little dark closet indicated by mine host, and there awaited the reappearance of the latter from the cellar with the promised sample of the new butt. Both quickly came.

"Awfu' times—father, awfu' times thae," said David, placing a tankard of claret on the table, and seating himself directly opposite his guest. "If this siege continues muckle langer, guid kens what 'll become o' us. They tell me that some o' the Frenchmen hae ta'en to eatin their dead horses already, for want o' better provender. But they can cook up onything, thae Frenchers, and can mak, I'm tell't, a savoury mess oot o' a pair o' auld boots. But come, tak a mouthfu' o' that," continued mine host, shoving the tankard towards his guest, "an' tell me what ye think o' our new browst."

Father Drinkhooly, who had not yet spoken a word, or in any other way noticed what had been addressed to him, than by nods and shakes of the head, readily obeying the gratifying invitation, seized the tankard, and, at one pull, emptied it of half its contents. Having performed this feat, he replaced the vessel on the table, wiped his mouth with a quiet, composed air, and, in a soft under-tone, said—

"Fair liquor, David—fair liquor. What size is the cask?"

"It's a gey thumper," replied mine host; big aneuch, I hope, to see oot the siege o' Leith."

"Ay, the heretic is pressing us hard, David. The strength of the wicked is prevailing," said Father Drinkhooly; "but there will be a day of count and reckoning. It is coming, David, coming on the wings of the thunder, to blast and destroy the sacrilegious spoilers; to scaith and render barren this accursed land."

"Weel, I wadna wonder," replied David, looking very serious; for, although he cared little for either the new religion or the old, he had, if anything, rather a leaning towards the latter; at least, so was suspected; but this was a point not easily decided on, owing to the very accommodating nature of David's doctrines, which, at a moment's notice, could adapt themselves to any circumstances.

"I wadna wonder," said David; "for I'm sure the spoilin and ravagin that's gaun on is aneuch to bring down the judgments o' Heaven on us. Heard ye if there hae been mony killed the day?"

"Alas! a very great number," replied Father Drinkhooly. "There has been a terrible slaughter to-day, at the western block-house. The brethren and I have shrived some twenty or thirty departing souls, who fell by the cannon-shot of the enemy—two of them officers and men of rank in the French army—worthy, pious men—who

have left something considerable to the brotherhood. But God knows if we will be permitted te enjoy it."

"Ay," said David, pricking up his ears, as he always did when money, or property in any shape, became the subject of conversation—"That was a lucky wind-fa'; for I daresay the brethren are no oot o' need o' a wee assistance o' that kind enow. Times are no wi' them as they used to be. What feck, noo, if it's a fair question, did the twa Frenchmen leave ye?"

"It's not usual for us to speak of these things, David," replied Father Drinkhooly—"not usual for us to make these things the subject of irreverent discussion; but, as thou art an old friend, I will gratify thy curiosity—doing the same in confidence. Here," continued the worthy father, slipping his hand under his cloak, and drawing out a leathern bag well stored with coin, "here are a hundred and fifty crowns of the sun placed in my hands by one of these dying Christians, and here are three gold rings, worth fifty merks each, that were given unto me by the other, under pledge of saying fifteen masses for the well-being of the soul of the departed donor."

"My feth! no a bad day's work," said David. "It's an ill wind that blaws nacbody guid. The siege is no like to be such a bad job for ye, after a'. Though ye should be driven oot o' the preceptory the morn, ye'll no gang empty-handed; and that same's a blessin. But here's to ye, father, and Gude send us mair peacefu' times;" saying this, mine host of "The Ship" cleared off the remainder of the tankard. On his replacing the latter on the table, brother Drinkhooly peered into the empty vessel with a half involuntary spirit of inquiry.

His host smiled. Then—"We maun replenish, I fancy," he said.

Father Drinkhooly simply nodded acquiescence, saying not a word.

In half a minute after, another tankard of claret reamed on the board, between mine host and his guest. By the time this second supply of the generous fluid was exhausted, brother Drinkhooly began to exhibit certain odd changes of manner. From being solemn and taciturn, he became energetic and talkative, thumping the table violently when he wished to be particularly impressive, and displaying, altogether, a boldness and vivacity which strangely contrasted with the quiet meekness of his demeanour but half an hour before. The claret then was doing its duty; for to its exciting influence were these changes in the moral man of brother Drinkhooly, of course, attributable.

It would not, we fear, much interest the reader to follow out in all its details the debauch now in progress of celebration by the landlord of "The Ship" and his worthy guest. Be it enough to say, that it finally ended in the latter's getting so overcome that he did not think it would be consistent either with his own character or the credit of the preceptory, to return to the latter until he had had, previously, an hour or two's sleep.

" 'Deed, I dare say ye'll no be the waur o't," said mine host, on brother Drinkhooly's suggesting the propriety of this proceeding, "for that claret's gey an' steeve. I fin thae twa jugs touchin my ain garret a wee thing, and it used to tak sax to do that. But I'm no so able to staun't noo, as I was wont."

This was certainly true; but, even yet, David was more than a match over the claret stoup for any two men in the county. His capacity in this way was extraordinary; and no contemptible proof of the fact was afforded on the present occasion; for, while the priest was all but completely prostrated, his host had not, to use his own phrase, "turned a hair;" although he had drank quantity for quantity with the vanquished churchman.

Always kind and attentive to the wants of his guests, and, from a fellow feeling, especially tender of those who were in the helpless condition of brother Drinkhooly, David, desiring the latter to take his arm, conducted, or rather, smuggled him into a small back bedroom, helped him off with his gown and shovel hat, and tumbled him into bed, where he left him, with a promise to awake him at the expiry of two hours.

Having thus disposed of his clerical friend, David betook himself to the duties of the house: to the filling of measures of wine, brandy, and ale, to the running hither and thither, supplying the wants of one party of customers, soothing the impatience of another, and joining in the drunken laughter of a third.

David was thus employed, when he was attracted to the door by an alarming outcry on the street. On reaching the latter, he saw a boy approaching at his utmost speed, and bawling out—

"A priest, a priest! For the love o' God, a priest to shrive a dying sinner. A priest, a priest!"

"What are ye screaming at, ye young rascal?" exclaimed David, intercepting the boy, and catching him by the breast. "Wha wants a priest?"

"It's a French offisher, sir, that has just been struck cnow wi' a cannon-shot on the ramparts," replied the boy; "and, as I was passing at the time, he bade me rin for a priest."

"Was there nacbody beside him?" inquired David.

"No ane, sir; and there's nacbody yet—for he's lyin doon at the east end o' the rampart, whar never a shot was kent to come before, as neither town's folk nor Englishers is ever in that quarter."

"Is he sair hurt?" said David.

"I'm thinking he is," replied the boy. "But I maun awa up to St. Anthony's, and get ane o' the brethren."

"Ye needna fash, my man," said mine host of "The Ship." "Hae, there's a groat to ye. There's ane o' the brethren in my house, and I'll send him up immediately to the puir man."

The boy, well enough satisfied with this conclusion to his mission, went his ways, seeking to have nothing farther to do with the matter.

Now, good reader, would you suspect it, that our friend David Wemyss was at this moment acting under the influence of one of the most wicked temptations that ever led an unhappy wight from the paths of righteousness? You would not; yet it is true—too true. Tempted by the exhibition of the bequests confided to brother Drinkhooly by the two wounded French officers, David Wemyss, beguiled by the devil, conceived the atrocious idea of arraying himself in the hat and gown of the unconscious churchman, and of officiating as father confessor to the dying gentleman on the ramparts, in the hope that he too would leave something to the preceptory, and make him the interim recipient of the bequest. Circumstances, David thought, were favourable to the adventure. The night was dark, and the wounded man was lying at a remote part of the rampart, where there was no great chance of his being annoyed with many witnesses. The whole affair, besides, he calculated, would not occupy many minutes.

Encouraged to the sacrilegious undertaking by this combination of happy circumstances, David Wemyss hastened, on tiptoe, to the chamber of the sleeping brother, and, in a twinkling, had himself bedight in the gown and hat of the latter.

Thus arrayed, he stole out by the back door, and, taking all the by-ways he could, hastened, as fast as his legs could carry him, towards the south-eastern extremity of the ramparts, where, as described to him, the wounded man

was lying. David was thus pushing along, when he suddenly felt himself slapped on the shoulder by some one behind. He turned round, and beheld a man closely muffled up in a cloak, who thus addressed him:—

"Your pardon, holy father, for this somewhat uncourteous interruption; but the urgency of my case must plead my apology. An expiring sinner, holy father, claims your instant attendance. I will conduct you to her. Will you have the goodness to accompany me?"

"Impossible—impossible," replied the counterfeit monk, in great perturbation at this most unexpected interruption, and threatened exposé. "I'm juist gaun on an errand o' the same kind enow, and canna leave ae sinner for anither."

"You will oblige me by accompanying me, good father," said the stranger, in a mild tone, but with a firmness of manner that was rather alarming. "You will oblige me by accompanying me, good father," he said, *looking* a little surprised at the style of the holy father's language, but making no remark on the subject.

"Canna, sir—canna, canna, canna, on ony account," repeated the unhappy brother of St. Anthony, with great volubility, and endeavouring to push past the stranger, who stood directly in his way, and who kept dodging in his front to prevent his succeeding in any attempt of this kind.

"Nay, now, good father, if you please—now, if you please, and without more bandying of words; for the case is urgent, and there is not a moment to lose."

"Man, it's oonpossible—utterly oonpossible," replied David, with desperate energy. "I tell ye it's oonpossible."

"Do not compel me to use force, good father," said the stranger, calmly but determinedly.

"Force—force!" reiterated the horror-stricken monk. "Wad ye use force to a holy brither o' the preceptory? That wad be an awfu like thing."

"I must; you drive me to it," said the stranger—"Heaven knows how unwillingly. My orders were peremptory. They were to accost the first of your brethren I met; to entreat him to accompany me; and, if he refused, to compel him. The first I have done; the latter I must proceed to do; but, rest assured, no personal injury shall be done you; and you shall, moreover, be well rewarded for your trouble."

Having said this, the stranger gave a low whistle, when he was immediately joined by two men, who had been concealed in a dark passage close by, and who the unhappy monk saw were well armed.

"Now, good father," resumed the person by whom the latter had been first accosted, "I trust you will see the folly of any attempt at resistance, should you—which God forfend!—be indiscreet enough to entertain any such idea. Excuse me hinting farther, holy father, that any attempt at outery, or at giving the slightest alarm of any kind, will be attended with unpleasant consequences."

"But—but—but"—exclaimed the distracted innkeeper, with rapid utterance.

"No buts, if you please, good father, but follow me," interrupted the stranger; and, saying this, he moved off, while his two companions placed themselves one on either side of their charge, and requested him to proceed.

Scarcely knowing what he did, but seeing very clearly that there would be imminent personal danger in farther remonstrance or resistance, the unlucky monk obeyed. This, however, he did only until he should have had time to reflect on his best course of proceeding—that is, until he should have taken it into due consideration whether he had not better brave exposure, and at once avow himself as no brother of St. Anthony, but David Wemyss, landlord of "The Ship," on the Coal Hill of Leith—reserving to himself, however, the right of keeping the secret of his purpose

in assuming the garb of the brotherhood. Having weighed the matter well, and taken all probable and possible consequences into account, David finally determined on making the confession above alluded to—hoping by this means to put an end to the awkward proceedings now in progress, and to accomplish, of course, at the same time, his own liberation. Having come to this resolution—

"Hey! hey!" he exclaimed, in a slightly raised voice, to draw the attention of the principal of his three guards or captors, who was still walking a little way in advance.

The person thus hailed stopped until David came up. The latter took him aside a little way, and whispered in his ear—

"I say, man, this is a' a mistak thegither. I'm no a monk. I'm no ane o' the brotherhood at a', man."

The man stared at him with surprise for a few seconds, without saying a word. At length, a satirical, or perhaps rather incredulous smile playing on his countenance—

"Come, come, now, father; that will never do," he said. "But I excuse your attempt, though a clumsy one, to impose on me; for the duties of your office have now become dangerous, and I do not wonder that you should seek to avoid them as much as possible. I was prepared for this—I was prepared for reluctance; and hence the precautions I took to compel, in case of failing to persuade."

"But I assure ye, sir, most seriously, that it's true I hae tell't ye," exclaimed David, with desperate eagerness, "I'm nae mair a monk than ye are."

"And, pray, who the devil are you then?" exclaimed the stranger.

"'Deed, to tell you a Gude's truth, I'm juist plain Davy Wemyss o' 'The Ship,' on the Coal Hill."

"Umph! oh! Don't know such a person; never heard of him."

"Od! that's queer," here interposed David, hastily. "I thocht everybody kent me."

"Not I for one," replied the stranger drily; "but, to cut this matter short, in the first place, I am not bound, good father, or hosteller, or whatever you are, to believe you; in the next, my orders were peremptory: I was instructed to accost the first person I met in clerical garb, and entreat him to accompany me; and, if he did not do so willingly, to compel him, as I told you before. So, there's an end of it. If you really be not what you appear to be, I can't help it. That's a point you must settle with others, not with me; I have nothing to do with it. My duty's done when I have brought you along with me; and that duty I am determined to do."

Saying this, the speaker, without waiting for farther remark or remonstrance, walked on, having previously made a sign to his two assistants to look to their charge."

What mine host of "The Ship's" feelings or reflections were, on finding himself thus cut off from all chance of escape from his awkward predicament, it would be rather tedious to describe. The reader will believe that they could not be very pleasant; and that is enough.

Whatever these feelings were, however, they did not hinder David Wemyss from entering, or rather attempting to enter, into conversation with the two men to whose charge he was confided.

"Od, men," he said, on their resuming their march, "this is an awkward sort o' business. I'm sure ye ken me weel aneuch—dinna ye?"

The only reply was a shake of the head.

"Davy Wemyss o' the Coal Hill? Ye canna but ken me, I should think," added the latter.

"No voord Ainglish," at length replied one of the men.

"Oh, ye're Frenchmen; ye belang to the Queen's

Guard?" said David, now enlightened on the subject of their silence. "Weel, this is waur and mair o't," he continued. "Sma chance noo o' makin oot my case."

In the meantime, the party, who had taken their way by the quietest and most circuitous routes, were rapidly approaching the wooden bridge over the Water of Leith, which, in these days, formed the only communication between the opposite sides of the river.

Having gained the bridge, they proceeded alongst it; and, thereafter, made for a certain outlet in the ramparts situated in this quarter. This outlet, as might be expected, seeing that the town was at this moment under siege, was strongly guarded, and no egress or ingress permitted excepting to persons properly accredited.

Of such, however, seemed to be the person who had captured the unlucky hero of our story; for, on David and his escort coming up to the gate, they found the way prepared for them by the former, who, keeping still in advance, had arrived there before them.

Without word or question, then, they were permitted to pass through.

At this point, David was strongly tempted to make his case known to the guard at the gate; but, perceiving that they too were all Frenchmen, he thought it would be of no use, as they would not understand him. So he held his tongue.

The guard—who, we need hardly say, were staunch Catholics to a man—were, in the meantime, sadly annoying David with reverences to his clerical character. They formed themselves into two lines, that he might pass out at the gate with all due honour, and kept touching their caps to him, with the most respectful obeisance, as he walked on between their ranks.

Having gained the outside of the wall, Wemyss' escort, still led on by their principal, conducted him, by circuitous

routes, towards the mills of Leith, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile from the town.

Here, under a shed, they found four horses ready saddled and bridled, in charge of a groom, who seemed to have been waiting their arrival. So soon as the party came up, the latter, without waiting for orders, disappeared for an instant; and, in the next, presented himself leading forth the four horses, two by each hand. On one of these David, notwithstanding his most earnest entreaties to the contrary, which he backed by earnest assurances that "he was nae horseman," was immediately mounted. His guards mounted one a-piece of the others; and the whole cavalcade now proceeded, at a round trot, towards Edinburgh—poor Wemyss bouncing terribly with the roughness of the motion, to which he had been but little accustomed.

On approaching the city, the leader of the party, who, on horseback as on foot, still kept in advance, suddenly drew bridle, and waited the coming up of the holy brother and his escort.

On the former drawing near—

"Our route, father, lies through Edinburgh," he said. "Now, as these are troublesome times for persons of your cloth, I would recommend your conducting yourself, for your own sake, as warily as possible. We shall take the quietest routes, in order to avoid observation; and I beg that you will neither say nor do anything while we are passing through the city calculated to defeat our caution or attract notice."

Having said this, and without waiting for any reply, the speaker rode on, leaving his charge to follow with his escort.

The party had now passed the village of Broughton, when, turning in an easterly direction, they passed round the eastern base of the Calton Hill, descended to the south

back of the Canongate, traversed its whole length, and finally entered the city by Leith Wynd.

For some time, the horsemen passed along without attracting any particular notice; and, very probably, would have continued to do so, had it not been for an idle boy, who, catching a glimpse of the brother of St. Anthony's flowing gown and slouched hat, just as the party had turned into the High Street, set up a loud cry of--

"Prelacy's mounted! prelacy's mounted! Hurra! hurra! Prelacy's mounted! and riding to ——."

Continuing to follow the cavalcade, and continuing his clamour also, the mischievous little rascal soon had a crowd at the heels of the horsemen. The boy's exclamations spoke the spirit of the times; so that others of a similar character soon arose from twenty different quarters, and from as many different voices.

"Doon wi' the limb o' Satan!" shouted one.

"Doon wi' the man o' sin!" shouted another.

"Pu' Papery frae its throne o' iniquity!" exclaimed a third.

"Strike your spurs into your horse's sides, and let us shew them clean heels for it," said the leader of the party, addressing his unhappy charge, by whose side he was now riding, and speaking in a low but firm and earnest tone.

"But, man," began the latter, who appeared to be in great trepidation.

"You'll be murdered else," said the former, interrupting him sharply, and, at the same moment, striking the spurs into his horse's sides—a proceeding which instantly carried him clear of the crowd, and, shortly after, out of sight and out of danger.

The prudent example of their leader was quickly followed by the other two men, who, also, clapping spurs to their horses, soon found themselves out of the tumultuous throng by which they were surrounded, to whose tender mercies

they left their unhappy charge, who being, as he said himself, no horseman, was unable to extricate himself from the now fast-thickening crowd.

Despairing of being able to effect his escape by any effort of horsemanship, the poor innkeeper, though with little hope of being believed, determined on divulging the facts of his case to the mob—always, however, of course, reserving to himself the original purpose for which he had assumed the unfortunate dress he now wore, the cause of all his trouble.

Having come to this resolution, he began to address the mob, some of whom had already laid hands on him, for the purpose of dragging him from his horse.

"Guid folks," began David, "I'm nae mair a munk than ony o' ye. I'm"——

At this moment, a well-aimed brick-bat took the unfortunate speaker on the right temple, and tumbled him senseless from his horse.

The mob, somewhat appalled by the suddenness of this catastrophe, and imagining that the unhappy man was killed outright, stood aloof for a few seconds, when David, almost instantly recovering from the stunning effect of the blow, which had unhorsed him, started to his feet, and, finding the press around him not very dense, pushed his way through it, and took to his heels.

This proceeding was the signal for a general chace, and it instantly took place. Relieved from the apprehension of having a murder to answer for, the mob, with shouts of exultation, started after the fugitive at full speed. Down Leith Wynd went David, instinct taking him in the direction of home; and down after him, like an avalanche, or raging torrent, went the mob, whooping and yelling as they rushed along.

Maddened and distracted with terror, David's progress was splendid, and, had nothing occurred to interrupt it,

would soon have carried him out of the reach of his enemies; but the steepness of the street, which had aided his velocity, also increased its perils. For a long while he kept his feet on the abrupt declivity, like a winged Mercury; but a treacherous inequality in the pavement brought him suddenly, and with dreadful violence, down on his face, while, partly over and partly on him, went half-a-dozen of the foremost of the pursuers, tripped up by his abrupt and unlooked-for prostration.

Those who fell on the unhappy victim of popular fury, now instantly, and, as they lay, betook themselves to avenging their fall by tearing and worrying at the unlucky cause of their accident; while others coming up, added to his punishment by an unmerciful infliction of kicks and buffets, that quickly deprived him of all consciousness.

It was at this critical moment that a person, apparently of consideration, approached the crowd, and asked some of those who were hovering around it, what was the meaning of the uproar.

"They're bastin a Papist—a fat priest o' Baal, they hae gotten haud o'," said a burly fellow who, from the leathern apron he wore, appeared to be a shoemaker. "Giein him a taste o' Purgatory before they send him to ——, just by way o' seasonin."

"What, is this more of the accursed doings of the spoilers and persecutors of the church," exclaimed the stranger, in a tone of deep indignation. "Are they about to add murder to robbery;" and, drawing his sword, he rushed into the crowd, calling out—"Stand aside, ye caitiffs! shame on ye; would ye murder a defenceless man? Would ye bring Heaven's wrath upon your heads by so foul a deed?"

The crowd, either awed by the bold bearing of the stranger, or taken by surprise by the suddenness of his assault, readily opened a way for him, so that, in an in-

stant, he stood by the bruised, battered, and senseless body of our unhappy brother of St. Anthony.

Seeing that the latter was in a state of utter unconsciousness, though still living, the stranger, after clearing a circle around the prostrate man, addressing those near him, said—

"Ten crowns will I give to any three or four amongst ye who will bear this unfortunate person whither I shall conduct them. It is not far: only to the southern side of the city."

For a few minutes there was no answer to this invitation; but it was heard with a silence which shewed that it had made an impression—that religious zeal and hatred were giving way to cupidity.

At length, a brawny-armed smith, with shirt rolled up to his shoulders, stepping out of the crowd, said—

"Well, I'm your man for one. I say, Bob, and you Archy," he continued, turning round, and selecting two persons from the mob, "will ye no join us in giein a lift to the carrion? Ten croons are no to be fand at every dike-side."

Without making any reply in words to this appeal, the two persons named came forward, although with a somewhat dogged and sullen air, and were about to seize limbs a-piece of the still unconscious victim of popular hatred, with the view of thus transporting him, as if he had been a dead dog, to the destination proposed for him, when the person who had now taken the unfortunate man in charge, objected to the unseemly and inhuman proceeding, and offered an additional crown for a bier or litter on which to place him.

The activity of the smith, stimulated by the increased reward, quickly produced the conveniency wanted. It was but a coarse and clumsy article; being nothing more than a few rough boards hastily put together; but it answered its purpose indifferently well.

On this latter, then, the body of our unlucky brother was now placed—his face dreadfully swollen and disfigured; and the procession moved off, with a shouting and laughing mob at its heels.

Leaving David thus disposed of, we will return to Leith for a space, to see how Drinkhooly came on, denuded as he was of his shovel hat and his gown.

On awaking from his nap, the worthy churchman, not well pleased that David had not come to rouse him as he promised, started up in great uneasiness, lest the gates of the preceptory should be shut, and his character as a regular living man be thereby injured.

What was the surprise of the good man, however, to find that he had been stripped of his gown while he slept, and left in his shirt sleeves. Alarmed at the circumstance, brother Drinkhooly began searching the apartment for the missing garment, and also for his hat, which he now found had likewise gone astray.

Being able to discover no trace of the missing articles, he commenced rapping on the door to bring some one to his assistance, although very unwilling to expose himself in his present predicament to any but his well-beloved crony, David Wemyss. He could not help himself, however. His gown and hat he must have. He could not leave the house without them, and without assistance they could not be got.

The worthy brother's rapping on the door being unattended to, he commenced with his heel on the floor, a proceeding which he had often found, as it has been facetiously termed, an "*effectual calling.*"

In the present instance, it brought mine host's wife into his presence. On her entering—

"Good woman, good Mrs. Wemyss, I would say, know ye anything of mine outer garment? My gown, know ye where it has been deposited? I likewise lack my

hat, good Mrs. Weymss; know ye what has become of it?"

"Truly, your reverence, I dinna ken," replied Mrs. Weymss, beginning to bustle about the apartment in search of the desiderated articles; "but they canna be far aff, surely. Does your reverence no mind whar ye laid them?"

"My hat, I recollect perfectly—there being no reason why I should not recollect it—I laid on this chair by the bedside here. Now it is gone. My gown I laid nowhere, but kept on me. So, of that garment I must have been denuded even while I slept. It is strange. Is my good friend David not in the way? He would, doubtless, explain all, and help me to mine outer covering and headgear?"

"Indeed, no, your reverence, David's no in the way; and I canna tell whar he is. He's been missing oot o' the house thae three hours; and gaed aff without telling ony o' us whar he was gaun, or what he was gaun aboot. Indeed, nane o' us kent when he gaed. Sae he maun hae slippit aff unco cannily."

In the meantime, the search for the missing articles of dress went on vigorously, but without any good result. They were nowhere to be found.

"What's to be done?" said the good father in a despairing tone, as he threw himself into a chair. I cannot go through the streets in this indecent condition, and, if I remain longer, I will be deemed a disregarder of canonical hours. What is to be done?"

"Deed it's an awkward thing, your reverence, and how ye are to gae hame in your sark sleeves, and your bald head to the win, I dinna see."

"I'll tell you what you'll do for me, my good Mrs. Weymss," said the worthy father, after thinking a moment: "You'll send up your little girl to the preceptory, and I'll

give her a message to Brother Christie. I think he'll oblige me in a strait. He'll send me down a gown and hat wherewith I may hie me home, and your good husband, and my good friend, David, will, doubtless, find me mine own garments when he returns."

"Surely, your reverence, surely; Jessy 'll be but owre prood to do your reverence's biddin," replied Mrs. Weymss, and she hastened to call her daughter.

On the girl making her appearance, the worthy brother gave her her instructions.

He desired her to go to the preceptory; to ask a private word of Brother Christie; and to say to him that he, Drinkhooly, had got into tribulation. That, having some matters of private concernment to talk over with mine host of "The Ship," he had called on him, and that, while there, overcome with exhaustion, in consequence of his late fatiguing duties, he had fallen asleep, and that, while he slept, some one had removed his gown and hat, and that he could nowhere find the same, and could not therefore return to the preceptory unless his good brother, Christie, would furnish him with the loan of these two articles, the which, he had no doubt, he would readily do.

Charged with this rather long-winded message, the girl departed on her mission. In less than a quarter of an hour she returned, but brought neither hat nor gown.

"Has he refused them?" inquired the worthy brother, with a look of grievous discomfiture, when he saw the girl enter without the much-desired articles. "What did he say?"

"He said, sir," replied the girl, who was both too young and too single-minded to think of saving any one's feelings at the expense of truth, "that, if ye had drank less o' David Wemyss' claret, ye wad hae kenned better what had become o' your gown and hat."

"*O scandalum magnatum!*" exclaimed the indignant

priest. "Doth he—doth Brother Christie accuse me of vinous indulgences? Him whom I have, a hundred times, helped to his dormitory, when incapacitated therefrom by the excess of his potations. And he would not give thee the garments?"

"No, please you, sir; he said ye micht gang without the breeks for him. He wadna send ye a stitch."

It became now matter for serious consideration what was to be done. It was true that the good father might easily have been arrayed for the nonce in a coat and hat of his friend, David Wemyss', and might, so attired, pass unheeded through the streets. But how was he to account for his appearance in such an unseemly garb at the preceptory. It might lead to some awkward inquiries as to how the good brother had spent the evening.

There was no other way for it, however. So, equipped in the deficient articles from mine host of "The Ship's" wardrobe, Brother Drinkhooly stole out of the house, slunk along the streets, gained the gate of the preceptory, knocked thereat, whispered two or three words of explanation to the porter, with whom he was fortunately in good terms, and, finally, got snugly to his own dormitory without detection.

To return to mine host of "The Ship." It was not for nearly twelve hours after the occurrence of the tragical affair of Leith Wynd, that David Wemyss was restored to a consciousness of existence. When he was, conceive, if you can, reader, his surprise and amazement to find himself in a superb bed, hung round with rich crimson velvet curtains, and whose coverlets were of satin fringed with gold. The room, which was also gorgeously furnished, was so darkened when David awoke from the refreshing sleep which had restored him to the possession of his senses, that it was some time before he discovered all the splendours with which he was surrounded.

When these, however, had at length begun to take his eye, he started up on his elbow, and, with a mingled look of perplexity, consternation, and bewilderment, commenced a survey of the magnificent chamber of which he thus so strangely and inexplicably found himself an occupant.

How or when he had been brought there, he could not conceive; neither, for a good while, had he any recollection whatever of the pummelling with which he had been favoured in Leith Wynd. The operation, however, of certain physical effects of that incident—namely, a painful aching of the bones, and an almost total inability to move either leg or arm, gradually unfolded to him, although only in a dim and confused manner, the occurrence of the preceding night.

In the meantime, David went on with his survey of the apartment, during which he perceived two objects that convinced him that he was in the house of a Roman Catholic—of one of those who still clung to the ancient religion of the kingdom, and who held in detestation and abhorrence the doctrines of the new faith.

These objects were a large painting, over the fireplace, of the Saviour on the Cross, and a small silver crucifix which stood on a table close by the side of the bed; there was also lying on the floor, opposite the crucifix, and near to it, a crimson velvet cushion with gold tassels on which were such indentations as intimated its having been recently knelt upon.

Having completed the examination of his new premises, David Wemyss threw himself back on the bed, in order to take a deliberate survey in his own mind of his present strange position, and of all the circumstances connected therewith.

"'Od, but this is a most extraordinar affair, and a dooms awkward ane," thought David, to himself. "Wha wad hae dreamed o't. Wha wad hae dreamed that sae simple a

thing as me putting on Drinkhooly's goun, wad hae led to a' this mischief.

"What'll they think's become o' me in Leith? And what'll I say for mysel whan I gae back? And what'll Drinkhooly do for his goun? Od, they'll excommunicat him; they'll ruin him. God help us, it's an awfu' business. But, whar am I?—Wha's house is this, and hoo got I till't? And hoo and whan am I to get hame again; for I fin' that I couldna keep a leg under me enow, an it were to mak me provost o' Edinburgh."

At this moment, David's somewhat disjointed, though pertinent enough reflections, were interrupted by the entrance of some one into the apartment.

The intruder, whoever he was, came in on tiptoe, as if fearful of disturbing the occupant of the apartment; and, on approaching the bed, peered cautiously into it, to see whether he was awake.

David, without saying a word, stared at the person, who appeared to be a serving man or cook, from his wearing a blue velvet cap on his head—the usual head-dress of such persons in those times, and his bearing a steaming silver posset dish in one hand.

David, as we have said, stared at the man, without saying a word—a line of proceeding which he adopted, in order that the other, by speaking first, might give him a sort of cue by which to guide himself in the impending colloquy.

Seeing that the patient was awake, the man, bowing respectfully, said:—

"I trust, holy father, I find you better. Here is a posset which has been prepared for you by the directions of our leech, worthy Dr. Whang o' the Cowgate Head, which you will be so good as take."

"My man," said David, without either accepting or refusing the proffered posset, "I'm misdoubtin that there 's

a sad mistak in this business a'thegither. Howsomever, let that flee stick to the wa' for the present. Can ye tell me whar I am, and hoo I cam here?"

"Most assuredly, holy father. You are just now in the house, and under the protection and guardianship of Lady Wisherton of Wisherton Mains, whose house is situated about two hundred yards south of the Kirk of Field. As to the manner of your coming here, holy father, it was this:—Her ladyship's son, Lord Boggyland, coming up Leith Wynd last night, found you in the midst of a crowd of sacrilegious ruffians, who were murdering you, and who had already, by their brutal treatment, deprived you of all consciousness. Seeing this, his lordship, who, as all his family—his good and pious mother included—are staunch adherents of the old religion, instantly interfered in your behalf, and had you conveyed to his mother's house, where, as I have already said, you are at the present moment."

"Umph," muttered David. "Is that the way o't. Then, I fancy, I'm juist oot o' the fryin-pan into the fire."

The serving-man, not perceiving the applicability of the remark, although somewhat surprised at it, made no reply, but again pressed the posset on the suffering martyr.

"Weel, weel, let's see't then," said David, raising himself up in the bed. "There can be nae great harm in that, I fancy. It'll no mak things muckle waur than they are. Is't onything tasty?"

His attendant assured him that he would find it very pleasant, being made by her ladyship's own hands, who long enjoyed a high reputation for manufacturing possets and comfits of all sorts.

Having raised the lid of the posset dish, and flavoured it contents, David pronounced it "savoury;" when, taking spoon in hand, he cleared out the vessel in a twinkling.

"A gusty mouthfu' that," said mine host of "The Ship,"

throwing himself luxuriously back on his pillow, "although I think it wadna been the waur o' a wee hair mair brandy in't."

The serving-man having done his errand, now left the room, retiring with the same careful step and respectful manner with which he had entered, and left David once more to his own reflections.

In these, however, he was permitted but a very short indulgence. His attendant had not been gone five minutes, when the door of the apartment was again gently opened, and an elderly lady, of tall and majestic form, arrayed in a close fitting dress of black velvet, with a gold chain round her neck, from which was suspended a large diamond cross, entered the sick man's chamber. It was Lady Wisherton herself. Approaching, with stately step, but with a look of tender concern, the bed on which her patient lay—

"It rejoices me much, holy father," she said, "to learn, from our good and faithful servitor, William Binkie, that your reverence begins to feel some symptoms of amendment."

"Ou, thank ye, mem, thank ye," replied David, with no small trepidation; for the dignified and stately appearance of his visiter had sadly appalled him. "I fin' mysel a hauntle better, thanks to your leddyship's kindness—takin' ye to be Leddy Wisherton hersel', as I hae nae doot ye are."

"You are right in your conjecture, good father," replied Lady Wisherton, rather taken aback by the very peculiar style of his reverence's language, which she did not recollect ever to have met with in any other person in holy orders before. The circumstance, however, only puzzled her; it did not, in the smallest degree, excite in her any suspicion of the real facts of the case. "You are right in your conjecture, good father," she said, "I am Lady Wisherton."

"So I was jalousin, mem," said David, who, by the way, we may as well mention here, had made up his mind to endeavour to avoid exposure, by not saying or doing anything to undeceive Lady Wisherton as to his real character, and to trust to some fortunate chance of getting, undetected, out of the house.

"O father!" said Lady Wisherton, bursting out into a sudden paroxysm of pious excitation, "what is to become of our poor persecuted church? When will a judgment descend on this unholy land, for the monstrous sins by which it is now daily polluted. Oh, dreadful times!—oh, unheard of iniquity! that a priest of God—a father of our holy church—should be attacked on the public streets of this city, and put in jeopardy of his life by a mob of heretical blasphemers! When will these atrocities cease? Oh, when, when, when?"

"Deed, mem, it's no easy sayin," replied the subject of this pathetic lamentation. "They're awfu' times. Nae man leevin ever saw or heard o' the like o' them. There, doon at Leith enow, they're murderin ane anither by the dizzen every day, and no comin a bit nearer the point after a'. Heaven kens whar it's to end. In the meantime, they hae gien me a confounded lounderin; I fin' that in every bane o' my body."

"You have been sorely abused by them, indeed, father," replied Lady Wisherton. "But a day of retribution is coming. You will be avenged, terribly avenged."

"There was ae fallow, in particular, amang them, that I wad like to see gettin a guid creeshin," replied David: "*that* was a great big scounneril o' a blacksmith, wi' his shirt sleeves rowed up to his shouthers. He was the warst o' the lot. I got mair and heavier waps frae him than frae a' the rest put thegither."

Again, Lady Wisherton looked surprised at the style of language in which her reverend patient spoke, his last

remarks being particularly rich in the homely vernacular of the country, and greatly was her perplexity increased by the discordance between his calling and his manner, which was every moment becoming more and more marked; still she did not, nor could suspect the truth.

"Was it not a blessing of Providence, father," resumed Lady Wisherton, "that my son, Lord Boggyland, happened to be in Leith Wynd at the time you were attacked by these sacrilegious ruffians?"

"Feth, my leddy, it was just that," replied David—"A Gude's mercy. They gied me a bonny creeshin as it was; but they wad hae dished me clean oot an it hadna been for him. Feth, yon fellows care nae mair for a man's life than they wad do for a puddock's."

"Your reverence's face is much swelled," said Lady Wisherton, suddenly attracted by the swollen and discoloured countenance of her patient. "Greatly swelled. You must allow me to bathe it with my lotion."

"Nae occasion, mem, nae occasion, thank ye; I dinna find it ony way painfu. Besides, I'll try and get up, towards the darkenin, and be steppin doon to Leith; for they'll be wonderin there what's come o' me."

It will be seen from this that our brother of St. Anthony contemplated an early retreat from his present quarters; and further, that he meant to avail himself of the obscurity of night to effect that retreat. But this was a point not to be so very easily managed as he thought.

"Leave my house this afternoon!" exclaimed Lady Wisherton, in the utmost amazement. "That, with your reverence's leave, indeed, you shall not do. You shall remain where you are, under my tendance, until you be perfectly recovered, which we dare not hope for under a fortnight, at the very least. But, in the meantime, good father, you shall have every attendance, every comfort which you can desire, or of which your situation will admit.

My son and I are but too happy, although we deplore the cause, of having been presented with an opportunity of testifying our reverence and love for a minister of our holy religion.

"As to your fears," she continued, "for any uneasiness among your friends in Leith, on account of your absence, be not concerned about that, good father; I have provided for it. I have sent notice to the preceptory of your misfortune, relating all that has happened, and giving intimation that you are in my house, and in safety; so have no doubt that some of the brethren will be here in the course of the evening."

Here was a pretty piece of information for the already but too much perplexed martyr to the old faith. Intimation had been sent to the preceptory, and half-a-dozen of the brethren would be in upon him immediately, and a dreadful exposé would, of course, follow. It was a most trying crisis, and David but too sensibly felt it to be so. He felt as if he could have wished the house to fall upon him, and bury him in its ruins.

Appalled and horrified, however, as he was at this impending catastrophe, he said nothing, but, anxious to be left alone, in order to have an opportunity of thinking over his position, and of taking into consideration what had best be done, he began to affect drowsiness; when his noble hostess, taking the hint, quietly left the apartment.

Hearing the door close, David first opened one eye cautiously, and then the other; then turning gently round, peered over the edge of the bed to see if the coast was clear. Discovering that it was, he threw himself again on his back, and, fixing his eyes on the roof, began thinking as hard as he could how he was to get out of his present dilemma. The sequel will tell the result of his deliberations.

On that same night, about twelve of the clock, David

Wemyss' worthy spouse—who had been in great distress at his sudden disappearance, and who was fully impressed with the belief that he had fallen over the quay and had been drowned—was startled by a low tap-tapping at the back door of "The Ship." Thinking it might be some one with tidings of her lost husband, she instantly got up, lighted a candle, and, although under no little apprehension and alarm, opened the door, when, lo! who should enter but her beloved David himself. She instantly set up a scream of delight.

"Whisht, whisht, woman," said David, stealing into a back apartment as fast as he could. "This is no a business to blaw about. The calmer sough we keep the better."

"But, gude sake, David," said his wife, on rejoining him, after having secured the door, whar hae ye been a' this time, and whar hae ye gotten that awfu-like face?"

"I hae gotten a hantle mair than that, guidwife, although ye dinna see't," replied David. "I dinna believe there's a hale bane in my entire buik. I hae had a bonny time since I left ye; aneuch to serve a man his hale life time; and yet it was a' crammed into ae four-and-twenty hours. But gie me a mouthfu o' brandy, guidwife, and I'll tell ye a' about it."

David now proceeded with his narration, giving his wife a detailed account of the series of adventures related in the foregoing pages. To these we have now to add only a reference to one or two points, which will be considered, probably, as requiring some explanation.

First, as to how our brother of St. Anthony escaped from Lady Wisherton's. This he effected by the simple process of stealing out of the house after dark. There was no other way for it, and he was fortunate enough to succeed in the somewhat hazardous attempt, by dropping

himself from a window of a story in height, at the back part of the house.

Who the person was who first laid hands on mine host of "The Ship," on his first appearance in his new character, or by whom he was employed, he never certainly knew, but suspected afterwards that he was a retainer of Lord Borthwick's, who was then in Leith with the Queen Regent. Whither, however, he meant to have taken him, or who the sufferer was for whom the last duties of religion were wanted, he never learnt; nor, indeed, for obvious reasons, did he ever inquire. The whole, in short, was a subject on which David Wemyss always thought the less that was said the better; and, acting on this opinion, it was one which he carefully abstained from making matter of conversation.

All his caution, however, could not prevent some hints of his adventure from getting abroad. These hints some of the little ragged scapegraces of the Coal Hill wrought into the following rhymes, which, in dark nights, they were in the habit of shouting in at the door of "The Ship," to the great annoyance of its landlord, who might frequently be seen rushing out, stick in hand, to inflict summary punishment on the offenders:—

"Davie Wemyss gaed oot a priest,
By filthy lucre temptit;
Davie Wemyss cam hame again,
And thocht naebody kent it."

## THE STORY OF CLARA DOUGLAS.

"The maid that loves,
Goes out to sea upon a shattered plank,
And puts her trust in miracles for safety."—*Old Play.*

I AM a peripatetic genius—a wanderer by profession—a sort of Salathiel Secundus, "doomed for a term," like the ghost of Hamlet's papa, "to walk the earth," whether I will or not. Here, however, the simile stops; for his aforesaid ghostship could traverse, if he chose, amid climes far away, while the circuit of my peregrinations is, has for sometime been, and must, for some short time more, necessarily be, confined to the northern extremity of "our tight little island"—*vulgo vocato*—Scotland. In my day I have seen many strange sights, and met with many strange faces—made several hairbreadth 'scapes, and undergone innumerable perils by flood and field. On the wings of the wind—that is, on the top of a stage-coach—I have passed through many known and unknown towns and villages; have visited, on foot and on horseback, for my own special edification and amusement, various ancient ruins, foaming cataracts, interesting rocks, and dismal-looking caves, celebrated in Scottish story. But better far than that, and dearer to my soul, my foot has trod the floors of, I may say, all the haberdashers shops north of the Tweed: in short, most patient reader, I am a travelling bagman.

In this capacity I have, for years, perambulated among the chief towns of Scotland, taking orders from those who were inclined to give them to me, and giving orders to those who were not inclined to take them from me, unless with a *douceur* in perspective—viz., coachmen, waiters,

bar-maids, *et hoc genus omne.* From those of the third class, many are the witching smiles lighting up pretty faces—many the indignant glances shot from deep love-darting eyes, when their under neighbours, the lips, were invaded without consent of parties—which have saluted me everywhere; for the same varied feelings, the same sudden and unaccountable likings and dislikings, have place in the breasts of bar-maids as in those of other women. As is the case too with the rest of their sex, there are among them the clumsy and the handsome, the plain and the pretty, the scraggy and the plump, the old and the young; but of all the bar-maids I ever met with, none charmed me more than did Mary of the Black Swan, at Altonby. In my eyes she inherited all the good qualities I have here enumerated—that is to say, she was handsome, pretty, plump, and young, with a form neither too tall nor too short; but just the indescribable happy size between, set off by a manner peculiarly graceful.

It was on a delightful evening in the early spring, that I found myself seated, for the first time, in a comfortable little parlour pertaining to the Black Swan, and Mary attending on me—she being the chief, nay, almost the only person in the establishment who could serve a table. I was struck with her loveliness, as well as captivated with her engaging manner, and though I had for thirty years defied the artifices of blind Cupid, I now felt myself all at once over head and ears in love with this village beauty. Although placed in so low a sphere as that in which I then beheld her, there was a something about her that proclaimed her to be of gentle birth. Whoever looked upon her countenance, felt conscious that there was a respect due to her which it is far from customary to extend to girls in waiting at an inn. Hers were

> "Eyes so pure, that from their ray
> Dark vice would turn abashed away."

Her feet were small and fairy-like, from which, if her voice, redolent of musical softness—that thing so desirable in woman—had not already informed me, I should have set her down as being of English extraction.

Several months elapsed ere it was again in my power to visit Altonby. During all that time, my vagrant thoughts had been of Mary—sleeping or waking, her form was ever present to my fancy. On entering the Black Swan, it was Mary who bounded forward to welcome me with a delighted smile. She seemed gratified at my return; and I was no less so at the cordiality of my reception. The month was July, and the evening particularly fine; so, not having business of much consequence to transact in the place, and Mary having to attend to the comforts of others, beside myself, then sojourning at the Black Swan, I sallied forth alone—

"To take my evening's walk of meditation."

When one happens to be left *per se* in a provincial town, where he is alike unknowing and unknown—where there is no theatre or other place of amusement in which to spend the evening—it almost invariably happens that he pays a visit to the churchyard, and delights himself, for an hour or so, with deciphering the tombstones—a recreation extremely healthful to the body, and soothing to the mind. It was to the churchyard on that evening I bent my steps, thinking, as I went along, seriously of Mary.

"What is she to me?" I involuntarily exclaimed; "I have no time to waste upon women: I am a wanderer, with no great portion of worldly gear. In my present circumstances it is impossible I can marry her; and to think of her in any other light were villanous. No, no! I will no longer cherish a dream which can never be realized."

And I determined that, on the morrow, I should fly the fatal spot for ever. Who or what Mary's relations had

been, she seemed to feel great reluctance in disclosing to me. All I could glean from her was, that she was an orphan—that she had had a sister who had formed an unfortunate attachment, and broken their mother's heart—that all of her kindred that now remained was a brother, and he was in a foreign land.

The sun was resting above the summits of the far-off mountains, and the yew trees were flinging their dusky shadows over the graves, as I entered the burial-place of Altonby. The old church was roofless and in ruins; and within its walls were many tombstones over the ashes of those who, having left more than the wherewithal to bury them, had been laid there by their heirs, as if in token of respect. In a distant corner, I observed one little mound over which no stone had been placed to indicate who lay beneath: it was evidently the grave of a stranger, and seemed to have been placed in that spot more for the purpose of being out of the way than for any other. At a short distance from it was another mound, overtopped with grass of a fresher kind. As I stood leaning over a marble tombstone, gazing around me, a figure slowly entered at the farther end of the aisle, and, with folded arms and downcast eyes, passed on to those two graves. It was that of a young man of perhaps five-and-twenty, though a settled melancholy, which overspread his countenance, made him look five years older. I crouched behind the stone on which I had been leaning, fearful of disturbing him with my presence, or rousing his attention by my attempting to leave the place.

After gazing with a vacant eye for a few moments upon the graves, he knelt down between them. His lips began to move, but I heard not what he said. I thought he was praying for the souls of the departed; and I was confirmed in this by hearing him at last say, with an audible voice:—

"May all good angels guard thee, Clara Douglas, and thou, my mother!"

As he uttered these last words, he turned his eyes to the newer grave. I thought he was about to continue his prayer; but, as if the sight of the grave had awakened other feelings, he suddenly started up, and, raising his hands to heaven, invoked curses on the head of one whom he termed their "murderer!" That done, he rushed madly from the church. All this was very strange to me; and I determined, if possible, to ascertain whose remains those graves entombed.

On leaving the churchyard, I was fortunate enough to forgather with an old man, from whom I learned the melancholy story of her who occupied the older-looking grave. She was young and beautiful. Accident had deprived her father of that wealth which a long life of untiring industry had enabled him to lay past for his children; and he did not long survive its loss. Fearful of being a burden to her mother, who had a son and another daughter besides herself to provide for out of the slender pittance which remained to her on her husband's death, Clara Douglas accepted a situation as a governess, and sought to earn an honourable independence by those talents and accomplishments which had once been cultivated for mere amusement. The brother of Clara, shortly afterwards, obtained an appointment in the island of Madeira. Unfortunately for Clara, a young officer, a relative of the family in which she resided, saw her, and was smitten with her charms. He loved and was beloved again. The footing of intimacy on which he was in the house, procured him many interviews with Clara. Suddenly his regiment was ordered to the Continent; and when the young ensign told the sorrowful tidings to Clara, he elicited from her a confession of her love.

Months passed away—Waterloo was fought and won—and Ensign Malcolm was among those who fell.

When the death-list reached Scotland, many were the hearts it overpowered with grief; but Clara Douglas had more than one grief to mourn: sorrow and shame were too much to bear together, and she fled from the house where she had first met *him* who was the cause of all. None could tell whither she had gone. Her mother and sister were agonized, when the news of her disappearance reached them. Every search was made, but without effect. A year all but two weeks passed away, and still no tidings of her, till that very day, two boys seeking for pheasant's nests upon the top of a hillock overgrown with furze—which the old man pointed out to me at a short distance from the place where we stood—accidently stumbled upon an object beneath a fir-tree. It was the remains of a female in a kneeling posture. Beneath her garments, by which she was recognised as Clara Douglas, not a vestige of flesh remained. There was still some upon her hands, which had been tightly clasped together; and upon her face, which leant upon them. Seemingly she had died in great agony. It was supposed by some that she had taken poison.

"If your time will permit," added the old man, as he wiped away a tear, "I will willingly show you the place where her remains were found. It is but a short distance. Come."

I followed the old man in silence. He led the way into a field. We climbed over some loose stones thrown together, to serve as a wall of division at the farther extremity of it, and slowly began to ascend the grassy acclivity, which was on both sides bordered by a thick hedge, placed apart, at the distance of about thirty feet. When half way up, I could not resist the inclination I felt to

turn and look upon the scene. It was an evening as fair as I had ever gazed on. The wheat was springing in the field through which we had just passed, covering it, as it were, with a rich green carpet. Trees and hills bounded the view, behind which the sun was on the point of sinking, and the red streaks upon the western sky "gave promise of a goodly day tomorrow."

"If, thought I, the hour on which Clara Douglas ascended this hill was as lovely as this evening, she must indeed have been deeply bent upon her own destruction, to look upon the world so beautifully fair, and not wish to return to it again. We continued our ascent, passing among thick tangled underwood, in whose kindly grasp the light flowing garments of Clara Douglas must have been ever and anon caught as she wended on her way. Yet had she disregarded the friendly interposition. Along the margin of an old stone quarry we now proceeded, where the pathway was so narrow that we were occasionally compelled to catch at the furze bushes which edged it, to prevent ourselves from falling over into the gulf beneath. And Clara Douglas, thought I, must have passed along here, and must have been exposed to the same danger of toppling headlong over the cliff, yet she had exerted herself to pass the fatal spot unharmed, to save a life which she knew would almost the instant afterwards be taken by her own hand. Such is the inconsistency of human nature.

Our course lay once more through the midst of underwood, so thickly grown that one would have supposed no female foot would dare to enter it.

"Here," cried the old man, stopping beside a dwarfish fir tree, "here is the spot where we found the mortal remains of Clara Douglas."

I pressed forward, and, to my surprise, beheld one other being than my old guide looking on the place. It was the

same I had noticed at the grave of Clara Douglas, within the walls of the ruined church of Altonby. I thought it a strange coincidence.

Summer passed away, winter and spring succeeded, and summer came again, and with it came the wish to see Mary once more. However much I had before doubted the truth of the axiom, that "absence makes the heart grow fonder," I now felt the full force of its truth. My affection for Mary was, day after day, becoming stronger; and, in spite of the dictates of prudence, my determination never to see her again began to falter; and one evening I unconsciously found myself in the yard of the Black Swan. Well, since I had come there at any rate, it would be exceedingly foolish to go away again without speaking to Mary; so I called to the stable boy to put up my horse. The boy knew me, for I had once given him a sixpence for running a message, and he came briskly forward at my first call, no doubt with some indistinct idea of receiving another sixpence at some no very distant date.

"Eh! Mr. Moir," said the boy, while I was dismounting, in answer to my question, "What news in the village?" "Ye'll no guess what's gaun to happen? Our Mary, the folk say, is gaun to be married!"

Our Mary! thought I, can *our* Mary be *my* Mary? and, to ascertain whether they were one and the same personage, I inquired of the boy who our Mary was.

"Ou!" replied he, "she's just bar-maid at the inn here."

I started, now that this disclosure had unhinged my doubts; and subduing, as well as I was able, my rising emotion, I boldly asked who was "the happy man."

"They ca' him a captain!" said the boy, innocently; "but whether he's a sea captain, an offisher in the army, or a captain o' police, I'm no that sure. At ony rate, he aye gangs aboot in plain claes. He's been staying for a month

here, an' he gangs oot but seldom, an' that only in the gloamin."

After thanking the boy, and placing the expected silver coin in his hand, I turned the corner of the house in my way towards the entrance, determined, with my own eyes and ears, to ascertain the truth of the boy's statement. The pace at which I was proceeding was so rapid, that, ere I was aware of the vicinity of any one, I came bump against the person of a gentleman, whom, to my suprise, I instantly recognised as the mysterious visitant to the grave of Clara Douglas, and to the spot where her relics were found. He seemed to regard me with a suspicious eye; for he shuffled past without uttering a word. His air was disordered, his step irregular, and his whole appearance was that of a man with whom care, and pain, and sorrow had long been familiar.

Can this be the captain? was the thought which first suggested itself to me. It was a question I could not answer; yet I entered the Black Swan, half persuaded that it was.

"Ah! Mr. Moir," cried Mary, coming forward to welcome me in her usual way, the moment she heard my voice, "you have been long a stranger. I fancied that, somehow or other, I was the cause of it, for you went away last time without bidding me good-by." I held her hand in mine, I saw her eyes sparkle, and the blush diffuse her cheek, and I muttered a confused apology. "Well! I am so glad to see you," she continued. "It was but yesterday I spoke of you to the captain."

"The captain," I repeated, while the pangs of jealousy, which had, during the last five minutes, been gradually lulled over to sleep, suddenly roused themselves. "Who is the captain, Mary?"

"Oh! I'm sure you will like him when you become acquainted with him," said she, blushing. "There is some-

thing so prepossessing about him, that really I defy any one not to like him." The animation with which she gave utterance to these words made me miserable, and I cursed the captain in my heart.

The next day passed over without my being able to obtain a sight of my rival; and, when I walked out in the afternoon, he had not yet risen. Mary's assigned reason for this was, that he was an invalid; but his was more the disease of the mind than of the body. In his memory there was implanted a deep sorrow, which time could never root out. In my walk, the churchyard and the venerable ruins of the church were visited—I stood again beside the grave of the hapless Clara Douglas, and her melancholy story afforded me a theme for sad reflection, which for a while banished Mary and all jealous fears from my mind.

It was evening when I reached "mine inn." On passing the parlour window, a sight met my eye which brought the colour to my cheeks. A tall, noble-looking man lay extended upon the sofa, while Mary leant over him in kindly solicitude, and, with marked assiduity, placed cushions for his head, and arranged his military cloak. This, then, must be the captain, and he and my mysterious friend were not the same. That was some consolation, however.

Thus as he lay, he held Mary's hand in his. My breast was racked with agony intense; for

> "Oh! what a host of killing doubts and fears,
> Of melancholy musings, deep perplexities,
> Must the fond heart that yields itself to love,
> Struggle with and endure."

Once I determined on flying from the scene, and leaving my rival in undisputed possession of the village beauty; but, having been resolved that no woman should ever have it in her power to say she made me wretched, I screwed my

courage to the sticking place, and, on seeing Mary leave the parlour, I shortly afterwards entered it.

The stranger scarcely noticed my entrance, so intently was his attention fixed upon the perusal of a newspaper which he held in his hand. I sat down at the window, and, for want of something better to do, gazed with a scrutinizing eye upon the gambols of the ducks and geese outside.

After some time Mary came in to ask the captain what he would have for supper.

"This is the gentleman I spoke of," she said, directing her expressive glance towards me.

"Mr. Moir must pardon my inattention!" said the stranger, laying down the paper; "I was not aware that my pretty Mary's friend was in the room."

His urbane manner, his soft winning voice, made me feel an irresistible impulse to meet his advances. He proposed that we should sup together, and I sat down at the table with very different feelings from those which had been mine on entering the parlour that evening. I felt inclined to encourage an intimacy with the man whom, but a short while before, I had looked upon with aversion.

As the night wore on, I became more and more captivated with the stranger. His conversation was brilliant and intellectual; and, when we parted for the night, I began to find fault with myself for having for a moment harboured dislike towards so perfect a gentleman. I resolved to stay a few days longer at Altonby, for the purpose of improving our acquaintance. The stranger—or, as he was called at the inn, "the captain"—expressed delight when he was informed of my resolution; and, although he seldom rose before the afternoon, we spent many pleasant hours together.

On the evening of the third day of my sojourn, he expressed a wish that I would accompany him in a short

walk. Notwithstanding his erect and easy carriage, there was a feebleness in his gait, which he strove in vain to contend against; and it was but too evident that a broken spirit, added to a shattered constitution, would speedily bring him to his grave.

Leading the way into the churchyard, to my surprise he stopped at the resting-place of the ill-starred lady, the story of whose untimely end I had so patiently listened to the last time I visited Altonby.

"I am exceedingly fortunate," said the captain, "in having met with one so kind as you, to cheer the last moments of my earthly pilgrimage. You smile—nay, I can assure you that I feel I am not long for this world. The object of my visit to this spot, to-night, is to ask you to do me the favour, when I am dead, of seeing my remains laid here—here, beside this grave, o'er which the grass grows longer than on those around;" and he pointed to the grave of Clara Douglas. After a moment, he continued:—"Unlike other men, you have never annoyed me by seeking to inquire of me, who or what I am; and, believe me, I feel grateful for it. I would not wish that you should ever know the history of the being who stands before you. When the earth closes over my coffin, think of him no more."

Although the captain had done me the honour of calling me unlike other men—a distinction most folks are so exceedingly desirous of obtaining—I must own that I had hitherto felt no common degree of curiosity concerning him; and now that there was no prospect of it being gratified, its desire increased tenfold, and I would now have given worlds, if I had had them, to have learned something of the birth, parentage, and education of the captain.

"And now," he added, "I beseech you, leave me for a short time—I would be alone."

In silence I complied, sauntering outside the ruins, and seeking to find, in my old avocation of perusing the tombstones, the wherewithal to kill the time during which the captain held communion with the dead; for I could not help thinking that it was for such a cause he had desired to be left to himself.

Ten—twenty minutes passed, and the captain did not appear. I retraced my steps, and again entered the ruins, by the farther end. The gloom which prevailed around—the monuments which intervened—and, above all, the distance at which I then was from the grave of Clara Douglas—prevented me from descrying the captain. I had advanced a few paces when I heard voices in high altercation. I stopped; and, as I did so, one of the speakers, in whose clear intonation I could recognise the captain, said—"On my word, I returned here the instant my wounds were healed—I returned to marry her—and my grief could not be equalled by your's when I heard of her melancholy fate."

"Liar!" exclaimed the other; "you ne'er intended such. My sister's wrongs call out aloud for vengeance; and here—here, between her grave and that of our sainted mother—your blood shall be offered up in atonement."

This was instantly followed by the report of a pistol. I rushed forward, and beheld, O horror! the captain stretched upon the ground, and the blood streaming from a wound in his breast. I caught a glimpse of his assassin, as he fled from the church; it was the stranger whom I had seen, on a former visit, at the grave of Clara Douglas, and beside the fir-tree where her remains had been found. I made a motion to follow him, but the captain waved me back—"Let him go," said he; "I forgive him. I have no wish that he should die upon the scaffold." So saying, he fell back exhausted; and, in my haste to procure assistance for him, I quite forgot the assassin, until it was too late.

The captain was conveyed to the Black Swan, where, with Mary to attend his every want, he was, no doubt, as comfortable as if he had had a home to go to, and a beloved wife to smooth his dying pillow. Mary bestowed more than ordinary care and attention upon him, which, although she had declared to me that she could never love the captain so well as to marry him, should he ever condescend to make the offer, brought back occasionally a pang of jealousy to my heart. I could not exactly understand the extent of her regard for him.

Having business to transact at a neighbouring town, I left Altonby the next day, with a determination to return, ere the lapse of a week, to see the captain, I feared for the last time. I had been but two days gone, when I received a note from Mary, informing me that he was daily becoming worse, and that it was the fear of his medical attendant that he could not live four-and-twenty hours. With the utmost speed, I therefore hastened back to the Black Swan, where, indeed, I saw that the surgeon had had quite sufficient reason for his prediction—the captain was greatly altered since I last saw him. Wan and emaciated, he lay in resignation upon his couch, calmly waiting the approach of death. He seemed quite composed.

Taking my hand in his, he reminded me of his wish regarding his burial-place. I assured him that it should strictly be complied with. A smile lighted up his pale countenance for an instant, as I pledged myself to this. He then drew from under his pillow a parcel of letters, tied together with a faded ribbon, and desired me to consign them, one by one to the flames. With an eager eye, and a countenance full of excitement, did he watch them as they consumed away. I did not dare to examine minutely the address on the letters, but, from the glance I had of them, I could see they were all written in an elegant female hand. When all were gone—"And this," said he, "is like

to human life—a blaze but for an instant, and then all is ashes." He paused, and then continued, as he held a small packet in his hand, more in soliloquy than if he were addressing me—"Here is the last sad relic I possess—shall I?—Yes! yes! it shall go as the others have gone. How soon may I follow it?" He stretched forth his hand towards me. I took the packet. Instantly, as if the last tie which bound him to the earth had been hastily snapped asunder, the captain fell backwards upon his couch. I thrust the packet into my bosom, and ran to afford him assistance. He was beyond human help—he was dead!

The grief of Mary knew no bounds when the dismal tidings were conveyed to her; she was like one distracted. Mine was more chastened and subdued.

The remains of the captain were duly consigned to that spot of earth he had pointed out to me. After his death, there was found a conveyance of all his property, which was pretty considerable, to Mary, accompanied with a wish that I would marry her. To this arrangement Mary was quite agreeable; and accordingly, our nuptials were solemnized in about six months after the death of the captain. It was then that Mary confided to me that she was the sister of Clara Douglas; but when I made inquiry at her concerning the nature of her attachment to the captain, she always avoided answering, and seemed not to wish that his name should be mentioned in her hearing.

Several years passed, and I had forgotten all about the packet which the captain on his death-bed had placed in my hand, till one day, in looking for something else, which, of course, I could not find—(no one ever finds what he wants)—I accidentally stumbled upon the packet. Curiosity induced me to open it. A lock of black hair, tied with a piece of light-blue ribbon, and a letter, were its contents. Part of the letter ran thus:—"Enclosed is some of my hair—I don't expect you to keep it, for I have heard

you say you did not like to have any such thing in your possession. I will not *ask* you, lest I might be refused; but if you give me some, I'll get it put into one of my rings, and shall never, never part with it." This letter bore the signature of Clara Douglas!

Here, then, was a solution of all the mystery. The captain was the lover of Clara, and this had been the cause of Mary's intimacy with him.

Of the fate of the brother I afterwards heard. He was killed in a street brawl one night in Paris, and Mary never knew that he was the assassin of the captain.

# THE FAIR.

You may smile, reader, at the idea of a story entitled—The Fair; but read on, and you may find it an appropriate title to a touching, though simple tale. This may seem like the writer's praising his own production—but that is neither here nor there amongst authors—it is done every day; and not amongst authors only, but amongst all trades, crafts, and professions. If a man does not speak well of his own wares, whom does he expect to do it for him, when every person is busy selling wares of his own? You know the saying—"He's a silly gardener that lichtlies his ain leeks." But to go on with The Fair. On a Fair day, nature always turns out hundreds of her best human specimens of unsophisticated workmanship. Did you ever examine the countenances of a rustic group around a stall covered with oranges and sweetmeats—a bevy of rustic beauties, besieging the heart and the pockets of a rural bachelor of two-and-twenty? The colour of one countenance is deep and various as the rainbow—a second emulates the rose—a third the carnation—while the face of a fourth, who is deemed the old maid of her companions, is sallow as a daffodil after a north wind. There blue eyes woo, and dark eyes glance affection, and ruby lips open with the jocund laugh; and there, too, you may trace the workings of jealousy, rivalry, and envy, and other passions less gentle than love, according as the oranges and gingerbread happen to be divided amongst the fair recipients. You, too, have heard the drum beat for glory, and the shrill note of the fife ring through the streets, while a portly sergeant, with a sword bright as a sunbeam, and unsheathed in his hand, flaunted his smart cockade, or belike shook a well

lined purse as he marched along, or, halting at intervals, shook it again, while he harangued the gaping crowd—"Now, my lads—now is the time for fortune and glory! There, by Jupiter! there is the look—the shoulders—the limbs—the gait of a captain at least! Join us, my noble fellow, and your fortune is made—your promotion is certain! God save the King! Down with the French!"—"Down wi' them!" cries a young countryman, flushed with "the barley bree," and, borrowing the sword of the sergeant, waves it uncouthly round his head—feels himself a hero—a Sampson—a Cæsar—all the glories of Napoleon seem extinguished beneath his sword arm. "Down wi' them!" he cries again more vehemently, and again—"Hurra for the life of a sodger!"—and the next moment the ribbon streams from his Sunday hat. On such incidents turns our present story.

Willie Forbes was a hind in Berwickshire. He was also the only child and the sole support of a widowed mother, and she loved him as the soul loveth the hope of immortality; for Willie was a dutiful son and a kind one, and, withal, one of whom many mothers in Scotland might have been proud; for his person was goodly as his heart was affectionate; and often as his mother surveyed his stately figure, she thought to herself—as a mother will—that "there wasna a marrow to her Willie in a' braid Scotland." Now, it chanced that, before Willie had completed his twenty-third year, they were "in need of a bit lassie," as his mother said, "to keep up the bondage." Willie, therefore, went to Dunse hiring, to engage a servant; but, as fate would have it, he seemed to fix upon the most unlikely maiden for field-work in the market. At a corner of the market-place, as if afraid to enter the crowd, stood a lovely girl of about eighteen. Her name was Menie Morrison. "Are ye for hiring the day, hinny?" said Willie, kindly. "Yes," was the low and faltering

reply. "And what place was ye at last?" "I never was in service," said she; and as she said this, she faltered more. "An' where does your father live—what is he?" continued Willie. "He is dead," answered Menie, with a sigh. Willie paused for a few moments, and added—"And your mother?" "Dead, too!" replied the maiden; and tears gushed into her eyes. "Puir thing! puir thing!" said Willie; "weel, I'm sure I dinna ken what to say till't." "You may look at this," said she; and she put into his hands a slip of paper. It was her character from the minister of the parish where she had been brought up. "That's very excellent," said Willie, returning the paper; "very satisfactory—very, indeed. But—can ye—can ye hoe?" added he, hesitatingly. "Not well," answered she. "I like that, that's honest," added he; "hoein's easy learned. Can ye milk a cow?" "No," she replied. "That's a pity," returned Willie. But he looked again in her face; he saw the tear still there. It was like the sun gilding a summer cloud after a shower—it rendered her face more beautiful. "Weel, it's nae great matter," added he; my mother can learn ye." And Willie Forbes hired Menie Morrison through his heart. In a short time, Menie became an excellent servant. Willie and his mother called her—"*our* Menie." She loved her as a daughter, he as a man loveth the wife of his bosom; and Menie loved both in return. She had been two years in their service, and the wedding-day of Menie and Willie was to be in three months. For a few weeks, Willie, from his character and abilities, had been appointed farm-steward. He looked forward to the day when he should be able to take a farm of his own, and Menie would be the mistress of it.

But Berwick Fair came—Willie had a cow to sell, and Menie was to accompany him to the fair. Now, the cow was sold, and Willie was "gallanting" Menie and three or four of her companions about the streets. He could not

do less than bestow a fairing upon each; and he led them to a booth where the usual luxuries of a fair were spread out. At the booth, Willie found his master's daughter with some of her own acquaintances. She was dressed more gaily than Menie Morrison, and her face was also fair to look upon, but it wanted the soul, the charm that glowed in the countenance of the humble orphan. It had long been whispered about the farm-stead, and at the farm-steads around it, that "Miss Jean was fond o' Willie Forbes;" and some even said that it was through her partiality he obtained his stewardship. Menie had heard this, and it troubled her; for more easily than a breath moves the down on the thistle, will a word move the breast of a woman that loves. Miss Jean accosted the young steward for her fairing. "Ye shall hae that," said Willie, "but there's naething guid enough here for the like o' *you*—come awa to ane o' the shops." So saying, he disengaged his arm from Menie Morrison's, and without thinking of what he did, offered it to his master's daughter, and left Menie and her friends at the booth. Poor Menie stood motionless, a mist seemed to gather before her eyes, and the crowd passed before her as a dream. "Ye see how it is," observed her companions; "*naething here guid enough for her!*—if ye speak to him again, Menie, ye deserve to beg on the causie!" Her pride was wounded—her heart was touched—a cloud fell upon her affections. Such is human nature that it frequently happens revenge and love are at each other's elbows.

Now, Menie was not without other admirers; and it so happened that one of these, who had more pretensions to this world's goods than Willie Forbes, came up at the moment, while her bosom was struggling with bitter feelings. For the first time Menie turned not away at his approach. He was more liberal in his fairings than Willie could have been. As the custom then was, and in some instances still

is, there were the sounds of music and dancing. Willie's rival pressed Menie and her companions to "step up and hae a reel." They complied, and she accompanied them, scarce knowing what she did.

In a few minutes Willie returned to the booth, but Menie was not there. His eyes wandered among the crowd—he walked up and down the streets, but he found her not. Something told him he had done wrong—he had slighted Menie. At length a "good-natured friend" informed him she was dancing with young Laird Lister. The intelligence was wormwood to his spirit. He hastened to the dancing-room, and there he beheld Menie, "the observed of all observers," gliding among her rustic companions lightly as you have seen a butterfly kiss a flower. For a moment and he was proud to look upon her as the queen of the room; but he saw his rival hand her to a seat and his blood boiled. He approached her. She returned his salutation with a cold glance. Another reel had been danced —Willie offered her his hand for her partner in the next. "I'm engaged," said the hitherto gentle Menie; "but maybe Miss Jean will hae nae objections—*if there's onything guid enough for her here.*" At that moment, Willie's rival put his arm through Menie's—she stood by his side —the music struck up, and away they glided through the winding dance! Willie uttered a short, desperate oath, which we dare not write, and hurried from the room. But scarce had he left, till confusion and a sickness of heart came upon Menie. She went wrong in the dance—she stood still—her bosom heaved to bursting—she uttered a cry, and fell upon the floor.

She, in her turn, felt that she had done wrong, and, on recovering, left her companions, and returned home alone. She doubted not but Willie was there before her. The road seemed longer than it had ever done before; for her heart was heavy. She reached his mother's cottage. She

listened at the door—she heard not Willie's voice; and she trembled she knew not why. She entered. The old woman rose to meet her. "Weel, hinny," said she, "hae ye got back again? What sort o' a fair has there been? Where is Willie?" Menie turned towards the bink, to lay aside her bonnet, and was silent. "What's the matter wi' ye, bairn?" continued the old woman; "is Willie no wi' ye; where is he?" "He is comin', I *fancy*," returned Menie; and she sobbed as she spoke. "Bairn! bairn! there's something no richt," cried the mother, "between ye. Some foolish quarrel, I warrant. But tell me what he's done; and for sending my Menie hame greetin', I'll gie him a hamecomin'!" "No, no, it wasna Willie's wtye," replied Menie, "it was mine—it was a' mine. But dinna be angry." And here the maiden unbosomed her grief, and the old woman took part with her, saying—"Son as he's mine, ye just served him as he deserved, Menie." Her heart grew lighter as her story was told, and they sat by the window together watching one party after another return from the fair. But Willie was not amongst them; and as it began to wax late, and acquaintances passed, Menie ran to inquire of them if they had seen anything of Willie; and they shook their heads and said, "No." And it grew later and later, till the last party who left the fair had passed, singing as they went along; but still there were no tidings of Willie. Midnight came, and the morning came, but he came not. His mother became miserable, and, in the bitterness of her heart, she upbraided Menie, and Menie wept the more. They sat watching through the night and through the morning, listening to every sound. They heard the lark begin his song, the poultry leap from their roost, the cows low on the milk-maidens, and the ploughman prepare for the field; yet Willie made not his appearance. Time grew on till mid-day, and the misery of the mother and of Menie increased. The latter

was still dressed in the apparel she had worn on the previous day, and the former throwing on her Sunday gown, they proceeded to the town together to seek for him. They inquired as they went along, and from one they received the information, "I thought I saw him wi' the sodgers in the afternoon." The words were as if a lightning had fallen on Menie's heart—his mother wrung her hands in agony, and cried, "My ruined bairn!" And she cast a look on poor Menie that had more meaning than kindness in it.

They reached the town, and as they reached it, a vessel was drawing from the quay—she had recruits on board, who were to be landed at Chatham, from whence they were to be shipped to India. Amongst those recruits was Willie Forbes. When he rushed in madness from the dancing-room, he met a recruiting party on the street—he accompanied them to their quarters—he drank with them—out of madness and revenge he drank—he enlisted—he drank again—his indignation kindled against Menie and against his rival—he again swore at the remembrance of her refusing him her hand—he drank deeper—his parent was forgotten—he took the bounty—he was sworn in—and while the fumes of the liquor yet raged in his brain, maddening him on and drowning reflection, he was next day embarked for Chatham. The vessed had not sailed twenty yards from the quay—Willie and his companions were waving their hats, and giving three cheers as they pulled off—when two women rushed along the quay. The elder stretched out her arms to the vessel; she cried wildly, "Gie me back my bairn!—Willie! Willie Forbes!" He heard her screams above the huzza of the recruits—he knew his mother's voice—he saw his Menie's dishevelled hair; the poisonous drink died within him—his hat dropped from his hand—he sprang upon the side of the vessel—he was about to plunge into the river, when he was seized by the soldiers and dragged below. A shriek rang from his mother and

from Menie; those who stood around them tried to comfort and pity them; and, by all but themselves, in a few days the circumstance was forgotten.

"Who will provide for me now, when my Willie is gane?" mourned the disconsolate widow, when the first days of her grief had passed. "I will," answered Menie Morrison; "and your home shall be my home, and my bread your bread, and the Husband o' the widow, and the Father o' the orphan, will bring our Willie back again." The old woman pressed her to her breast, and called her "her mair than daughter." They left the farm-stead, and rented a very small cottage at some miles' distance, and there, to provide for her adopted mother, Menie kept two cows; and, in the neighbouring markets, her butter was first sold, and her poultry brought the best price. But she toiled in the harvest-field—she sewed, she knitted, she span—she was the laundress of the gentry in the neighbourhood—she was beloved of all, and nothing came wrong to bonny Menie Morrison. Four years had passed, and they had twice heard from Willie, who had obtained the rank of sergeant. But the fifth year had begun, and, from a family in the neighbourhood, Menie had received several newspapers, that, as she said, she "might read to her mother what was gaun on at the wars." She was reading an account of one of the first victories of Wellington in the east, and she passed on to what was entitled a GALLANT EXPLOIT. Her voice suddenly faltered—the paper shook in her hands. "What is't—oh! what is't, Menie?" cried the old woman; "is't onything aboot Willie?—My bairn's no dead?" Menie could not reply; she pressed her hands before her eyes and wept aloud. "My son! my son!" exclaimed the wretched widow—"oh! is my bairn dead?" The paragraph which had filled Menie with anguish, stated that a daring assault had been led on by Sergeant Forbes of the 21st, after his superiors had fallen; but that

*he also fell mortally wounded* in the moment of victory. I will not attempt to paint their sorrow. Menie put on the garments of widowhood for Willie, and she mourned for him not only many but every day. He had fallen in the arms of glory, yet she accused herself as his murderer.

Five years more had passed. It was March; but the snow lay upon the ground, and the face of the roads was as glass. A stranger gentleman had been thrown from his horse in the neighbourhood of the widow's cottage. His life had been endangered by the fall, and he was conveyed beneath her lowly roof, where he remained for weeks, unable to be removed. He was about fifty or sixty years of age, and his dress and appearance indicated the military officer. Menie was his nurse; and if her beauty and kindness did not inspire the soul of the veteran with love, they moved it with sympathy. He wished to make her a return, and, at length, resolved that that return should be an offer of his hand. He knew he was in his "sere and yellow leaf," and his face was marked with wounds; but for those wounds he had a pension; he had his half-pay as Major, and three thousand pounds in the funds. He would show his gratitude by tendering his hand and fortune to the village maiden. He made known his proposal to the old woman—maternal feeling suggested her first reply: "She was to be my Willie's wife," said she, ruefully, and wiped away a tear; "she was to be my daughter—and she *is* my daughter; I canna part with my Menie." But prudence at length prevailed, and she added: "But why should she be buried for me? No, sir, I winna wrang her; ye are owre kind—yet she deserves it a', an' I will advise her as though she had been my ain bairn." But Menie refused to listen to them.

When the sun began to grow warm in the heavens, a chair was brought to the door for the invalid, and Menie and her mother would sit spinning by his side, while he

would recount his "battles, sieges, fortunes." And thus, in an evening in May, as the sun was descending on the hills, ran his story: "Fifty of us were made prisoners. We were chained man to man, and cast into a dark, narrow, and damp dungeon. Our only food was a scanty handful of rice, and a cup of water once in twenty-four hours. Death, in mercy, thinned our numbers. A worse than plague raged amongst us—our dead comrades lay amongst our feet. The living lay chained to a corpse. All died but myself and my companion to whom I was fettered. He cheered me in fever and sickness. He took the water from his parched lips and held it to mine. And, maiden, I have been interested in you for his sake; for in his sleep he would start, and mention the name of Menie!"

"Oh, sir!" interrupted Menie and the old woman at once, "what—what was his name?"

"If the world were mine, I would give it to know," replied the Major, and continued: "He succeeded in breaking our fetters. We were left unguarded. 'Let us fly,' said he; but I was unable to follow him. He took me upon his shoulders. It was midnight. He bore me to the woods. For five days he carried me along, or supported me on his arm, till we were within sight of the British lines. There a party of native horsemen came upon us. My deliverer, with no weapon but a branch which he had torn from a tree, defended himself like a lion in its desert. But he fell wounded, and was taken prisoner. A company of our troops came to our assistance; I was rescued, but my noble deliverer was borne again into the interior; and three years have passed, and I have heard no more of him."

"But it is five years since my Willie fell," sighed Menie, Morrison. Yet she brooded on the word—*Menie.*

A wayfaring man was seen approaching the cottage. As he drew near, the eyes of the Major glistened—his lips

moved—he threw down his crutch. He started, unaided, to his feet—"Gracious Heaven!—it is himself!" he exclaimed; "my companion!—my deliverer!"

The stranger rushed forward with open arms—"Menie!—mother!" he cried, and speech failed him. It was Willie Forbes! Menie was on his bosom—his mother's arms were round his neck—the old Major grasped his hand. Reader, need I tell you more. Willie Forbes had fallen wounded, as was thought, mortally; but he had recovered. He had been made a prisoner. He had returned. Menie gave him her hand. The Major procured his discharge, and made him his heir. He took a farm; and on that farm the Major dwelt with them, and "fought his battles o'er again," to the children of Willie and Menie Forbes

## THE SLAVE.

Some of the inhabitants of Edinburgh, who, some years since, were in the habit of enjoying the pure air and delightful prospects which the head of Burntsfield Links and the Burghmuirhead afford, may remember the person of whose eventful life I am about to narrate a few passages. He was a square-built, thick-set old man, short in stature, with a weather-beaten countenance; which, though harsh in its expression at the first glance, exhibited, in conversation, all the traits of a mind influenced by humane sentiments and benevolent feelings. He was often to be seen standing near the wells, at the south border of the Links, where the females bleach their linen; gazing steadfastly upon them, his rough features in continued change, as if some inward feelings completely engrossed his whole faculties, and indulging in frequent mutterings, as if the occupations of those whose motions he was observing had roused some latent thoughts that had been laid up in his memory in former years. When I saw him first, he was busy looking at a few sprightly young females, whose loud laugh enlivened the scene of the bleaching-ground, as they were splashing the water on each other in merriment His features had something fearful in them. Anger flashed from his dark blue eyes, his shaggy eyebrows which covered them were knit, his teeth were compressed; and such unaccountable passion I had never seen so fearfully expressed. I almost shrunk from him; yet curiosity detained me, and I saw his features gradually relax, and a languid smile succeed his fearful frown. The change was as unaccountable as the contrast was striking, and I could scarcely believe that I still looked upon the same individual. The circum-

stance prejudiced me against him; for I attributed his fixed gaze upon the females to a cause very different from the true one; though why he should frown upon them I was still at a greater loss to understand. I saw him every day on the golfing ground; I wished for no intercourse with him, though there was a strange anxiety in my mind to know more of him; and, often as I followed the game we were busily engaged in, my eyes would involuntarily turn to where he stood or walked; and so habituated did I become to his presence that, when he was absent, I felt as if all was not as it used to be on the golfing ground. No one of whom I made inquiries knew aught of him; all I could learn was, that he was known by the name of the Captain, and had a black servant, who, with an aged female, constituted his whole household at Morningside, where he resided in one of those small self-contained villas in that retreat.

One morning towards the end of September, I was up rather earlier than usual, as I had engaged to accompany some friends upon a small party of pleasure; and, taking a turn, I had sauntered down past Merchiston Castle, to see how the reapers were getting on with their labour in the harvest-fields. There I met the identical Captain, the subject of my curiosity, coming up the road, accompanied by a female, who leant upon his right arm as if she walked with difficulty; while in his left he carried a young child, whose head lay upon his broad shoulder, pillowed as if asleep, or depressed with sickness; and his black servant, who bore a considerable burden, walked by their side. The female was evidently poor, but neat and clean; and her features were pale as death, with an expression of sickness and languor which roused my sympathy with my approbation of the Captain's benevolence—for I was satisfied he was engaged in an act of charity.

"Billy," I heard him say, "you had as well go on

before, and tell Mary to make all ready for our arrival. Poor thing!—she is a sailor's wife, and one of us."

"Yes, Massa, I do so—gladly do so," replied the negro. And away he moved from them, past me, with the bundle upon his arm; the smile that lit up his black face giving it, in my estimation, a look more interesting than I thought an African's could possess. The female looked gratefully at her supporter; and, as the Captain gazed first at her, then at her babe, I could see his clear blue eye glisten with tears—my own heart swelled, my bad impressions left me in a moment, and I could have put him in my bosom; I bowed to him with true reverence, as if I asked pardon for the injustice I had done him, and he looked at me as if he was gratified, and gently nodded his head—all the return he could make, so fully occupied was he with his benevolent labours.

"My good sir," said I, "since you seem to be engaged in a noble act, may I request to be allowed to lend my aid?"

"Certainly, with all my heart," replied he; "for I fear this good woman gets on but poorly with all the assistance I can give her."

"God bless you both," said the woman, as I gave her my arm, "for your kindness! Oh, my baby!—my poor baby, I fear, has got his death in the cold of this miserable night. My husband! little did you think that your Peggy was so near, and exposed to the bare heavens, sick and houseless, or you would have come to her help."

I requested her not to exert herself; and, as we proceeded, I learned that the Captain and Billy, having been out early, had found the female and child in the middle of a group of reapers, who had discovered her at the entrance of the field, chilled, and almost deprived of sense, with the infant wrapped up in her bosom; and they had in part restored her to some faint degree of consciousness when

the Captain arrived, and took the whole charge upon himself and his servant. The negro had used all the expedition in his power, and met us before we reached the house.

"Massa," said he, "you give me the piccaninny—I carry it, if you please."

"The child opened its languid eyes as he laid hold of it; and, looking in the negro's face, screamed with fright, leaned towards its mother, (who soothed it with her voice, in vain,) and nestled once more upon the Captain's shoulder, clasping its little arms friendly round his neck.

"Let him remain, Billy," said he; "I think the young one loves me."

In a few minutes we reached the house, where Mary received the female and child with all a mother's care, while the Captain and I looked on with feelings of satisfaction. I bade him adieu, promising to call in the evening. The day on which I had anticipated to be so happy, hung rather heavy upon my hands than otherwise; and I longed much for an interview with the Captain, expecting, when an intimacy was established, to be much amused with his conversation, as, from his appearance, he was no common character, and he had already roused my curiosity, by some broken hints of his adventures. I waited upon him, and found the female much restored, and the negro nursing the child, who appeared as much pleased with his nurse as he had been alarmed in the morning. After the first compliments were exchanged, I learned that the woman was the wife of a sailor, and on her way to Leith, to join him. She had journeyed on foot from Lanark, where she had been living with her mother during the time he had been on a voyage to the South Seas. Having got accounts of his arrival in London, and his being to be in Leith, where he had got a berth in one of the Leith and London smacks, and where he wished her to come and reside, she had set out, but come off her road to visit a

relation she had, who resided in Colinton, and with whom she had intended to stay during the night; but, unfortunately, she found that her relation had been dead for some weeks. The shock and grief had a great effect upon her; and, having no other acquaintance in the place, she had resolved to proceed to Edinburgh, as she calculated there was sufficient time for her to do so before it would be dark, and the weather was delightful. Oppressed with her bundle, and sunk by her grief, she had plodded on, in hopes of soon meeting the husband of her love; yet still her progress was slow, and the sun had set for some time, and the shades of evening had begun to thicken, ere she reached Craig-Lockhart; but the spires of the distant city began to rise in view, and she hoped soon to see the end of her toil, when, from over-exertion, or some other cause, she became sick and faint—her limbs bent beneath her—and with difficulty she made her way to a gate, to be off the roadside, in hopes that the attacks would soon go off, and she would resume her way. She fainted; and, when she came to her senses again, her babe was crying piteously upon her bosom. It was completely dark; and, after stilling the child, she in vain attempted to rise and resume her journey. It was far beyond her strength; and fear, bordering on despair, took possession of her mind. It was very chill; and, covering her infant in the best manner she could from the cold, she, almost without hope, commended herself to God, and, weeping, resigned herself calmly to her fate. She never expected to survive until the morning. The tedious hours rolled on, she knew not how—her child slept soundly, and her heart was in close communion with that merciful God who sustained her in all this misery—until the voices of the reapers sounded upon her ears like heavenly music, and hope once more warmed her breast; yet she was, at their first coming up, so weak that she could scarcely speak—a symptom that sur-

prised her, for she was unconscious of her extreme exhaustion, and her heart was hale from the manner in which she had employed her thoughts during the cheerless hours.

This is almost the words of the poor creature, who now was able to move about, and expressed a wish to proceed to Leith—a step that would not be heard of by the Captain, who said he would not allow her to depart until he had ascertained that her husband had arrived; and the name of the smack in which he sailed having been ascertained, we looked into the newspapers for the arrivals and departures at Leith, and found that the *Czar* had not arrived. The grateful Margaret agreed to remain, to the delight of the negro, who appeared as fond of the child as if it had been his own. At the Captain's request, I agreed, with pleasure, to stay supper.

"How I do love black Billy!" said my host; "this is a new trait of him; he is bold as a lion, faithful as a dog, and yet mild as a lamb."

"Sir," said I, "you appear to have a great regard for your black servant; I believe, from what I see, he is worthy of it."

"He is not my servant," said he—"he is my friend; yet it would grieve him to see any one do any little office for me, besides himself. He is as humble as he is good; and if you knew his history and mine, you would not be surprised at what I now say of him."

"Nothing that I know of would give me more pleasure," replied I, "than to know a little more of him and his friend, would he be so kind as oblige me."

"With all my heart," replied the old man, "if you have the patience to hear me."

Supper was at this time brought in by Billy, and soon despatched, when we drew in our chairs, and, seated by the fireside, I felt as if I had been on intimate terms with him for many years.

"My name is William Robertson," he began; "I am a native of Edinburgh, born within the sound of St. Giles' bells. My parents were once in a respectable line of business; but they died when I was very young, leaving me to the care of my paternal uncle—for I was an only child. This uncle, who has long since rendered his account at that judgment-seat where we must all appear, took possession of all my father's property, and became tutor to me. I was too young, at the time, to know my loss, but soon felt it in all its bitterness; for he used me very ill, so much so that I trembled at his voice. I was quite neglected, and allowed to ramble about as much as I pleased, amongst the other idle boys of the neighbourhood. I could read and write a little at the death of my parents, which was all the instruction I received. I was now nearly thirteen; and, as my uncle's abuse became quite intolerable to me, I left the house, boy as I was, and entered on board a trader at Leith, which was on the point of sailing for America. The captain, who was one of the best of men, waited upon my uncle before we sailed; and, I believe, as much by threat of compulsion by law, as any entreaty he used, got from him a few necessaries for me—for, besides his other ill usage, he kept me miserably clad. The five years I sailed in the *Bounty* of Leith, were the happiest I had ever spent—for my kind master had me taught navigation, and everything necessary for a seamen to know; but, in the middle of this prosperity, when I was to have been made his mate next voyage, the American war broke out, and I was impressed as soon as our vessel cast anchor in Leith Roads. I was only grieved to be parted from my kind captain, who was as vexed to leave me—but in vain he applied to have me set at liberty; and, to be short, I served out the period of the war, and was in a good deal of service. The seventy-four I was in being on the West India station, I was not paid off for

some months after the peace. On arriving at Portsmouth, I followed the usual course of sailors; and, having gone to amuse myself with some of my shipmates, I got robbed of all I had in the world; and, when I came to my senses, I found I had not even a sixpence in my pocket, a shoe on my feet, or a hat on my head. I was thus in a strange place, quite destitute; but I soon got a loan of some money from one of my comrades, who had been more prudent or more fortunate than myself, and set off for London to proceed to Leith. I learned there, from a Leith trader, that the *Bounty* had been taken by the French, and that my old captain had left going to sea; so I gave up all thoughts of returning to Leith. Berths were at this time not to be obtained—the seamen were to be seen wandering upon the quays of every port, begging for employment in vain; and thus, young and vigorous as I was, I was reduced to great want. In this dilemma, I thought of writing to my uncle—being advised by one of my acquaintances, who knew much more of the world than I did, to do so, and threaten to call him to account for his intromissions with my father's effects, if he did not send me, by return of post, a few pounds for my immediate wants. I waited most anxiously for an answer, which I duly received; but it brought me no supply, and I learned that he had been for a long time bankrupt, and was at this time, if possible, in greater want than myself. In a day or two after, I got a berth in a Bristol trader, whose master was an old messmate of mine, and who having told me I had a better chance in Bristol than in London, I cheerfully made the run; but I found berths as difficult to be obtained there as in London; and, in this desperate state of my affairs, I was persuaded to go a voyage to the coast of Africa, in a slaving ship—a species of employment that no seaman will engage in if he can do better. The men are in general not well used; and the

danger is great as regards life, both from fatigue and the climate. You must not judge of me by this voyage; for the slave trade was then as legitimate as any other branch of commerce, and much the same, for popularity or unpopularity, as it is in America at the present time."

"I don't think harshly of you on this account," replied I; "I only beg you to be as circumstantial as you can regarding this inhuman branch of traffic, now so happily destroyed by the unwearied efforts of Christian benevolence."

"To proceed, the vessel lay at King's Road, waiting my arrival on board, to overhaul her stores, to see what might be awanting. Her name was the *Queen Charlotte;* she mounted twenty-two guns; her captain was called by the seamen the Gallipot Captain, as he had formerly been doctor on board the same vessel, and, her captain having died in her last voyage, he was now the commander, in consequence of having brought her home. I went on board in the captain's boat, which was waiting for me, and to my great joy, found an old messmate who had sailed in the Exeter man-of-war with me. He was now second-mate of the *Queen Charlotte*, and I was engaged as boatswain. We were soon ready for sea; and unmoored about eight o'clock, the wind chopping about to the east. The captain and pilot came on board through the night, and we set sail for the African coast on the morning of the 1st of May, 1788. We passed the island of Madeira on the 8th of the month; and having got beyond the Canary and Cape de Verd islands, all became bustle on board, making preparations for the coast; the carpenters fitting up barricades to keep the male and female slaves apart, and the cooper getting ready all the tubs and vessels for their use. Though in anticipation, I may say that the males are never allowed to see the females until they are put on shore. The children are with the women, in general; but

are at times allowed to run at large all over the ship; and merry little creatures they are, and soon pick up a number of English words. The first land we made was Cape Palmas. Still steering along the coast, keeping a good offing, until we passed Cape Three Points and Cape Coast Castle, we crossed the Bight of Benin, and made the land again, which is so low that you can scarce distinguish it from the water—the tall palms resembling a large fleet of ships. The weather was so thick and hazy that we lay at the Bar five days before we could venture in—the tide running so strong, at full moon, that it is with difficulty the boats can pull against it. Upon our getting up, we found about thirty sail of large ships, some of them fitted up for one thousand slaves, all (save a few completely slaved) waiting for cargoes, several with none on board, and others half-full. There was one sad memento of the unhealthiness of this vile place which made a deep impression on me, thoughtless as I was. There was a beautiful French ship lying at anchor off the town, without one single person alive on board that had come out in her from Europe—captain, doctor, and all had died; and the agent had written to the owners to send out a new crew, either to complete the voyage or carry her back to France. This was a sad sight for us; and we all heartily wished ourselves safe out of a place where never a day passed without two, three, or more European sailors being rowed on shore, from the ships, to be buried. I shall not wound your feelings by all the details of this disgusting traffic. We longed much for King Peppel, the sovereign of the place, to come on board, to break trade, as it is called; for no native merchant dare either to buy or sell until he has got his 'dash' or present, and made his selection of the goods that are on board, at the same time that he fixes the prices himself. At times his Majesty is very backward, and a long time elapses before he comes on board—for he is as cunning and

political as any European statesman that ever penned a protocol; but the captain, who had been often here before, knew well the customs of the place, and how to entice him quickly to his wishes. In the morning, after we were all prepared, he sent his boat to the town, under the command of the mate, who carried a private 'dash' for his Majesty, consisting of a blue uniform, all covered with gold lace, so stiff that it would scarcely fold. This had the desired effect; for the answer was, that he would visit the *Queen Charlotte* next day—and this was the ninth since our arrival.

"In the morning all was again bustle, preparing for a sumptuous dinner for the king, in which there behoved not to be forgot a huge plum-pudding, and a roast pig, two dishes upon which depend the good or ill humour of his Majesty; and the larger the fragments are, the better is his humour, as all that is not consumed at the time is taken ashore with him. It was necessary that everything of value should be carefully put out of sight; for the moment it attracts the attention of the king, he will immediately ask for it, and never cease to importune until he has obtained it. There is no use in refusing, if you mean to trade; and all you can do, is to make the best terms for yourself you can, on the principle of present for present.

"About eleven o'clock, we heard from the shore a confused sound of drums and horns; and, soon after, the royal canoe, formed of one single tree, put off in great state, with nearly one hundred men paddling her along, her colours flying, and about a dozen of musicians in her bow, some blowing upon antelopes' horns, others beating upon drums and other things, and the remainder chanting or singing in a voice as melodious as the horns and drums. His Majesty sat upon a platform, in an arm-chair, in the centre of the canoe, surrounded by his favourites, all of whom he invites to his feasts. They were dressed agreeably to

their tastes—his Majesty's uniform consisting of a cocked hat, a blue laced coat and red vest, with a shirt ruffled at breast and wristbands, and about six or seven yards of calico wrapped round his loins; while his legs and feet were wrapped in flannel, as he was at this time suffering from gout. He appeared to be about fifty years of age, portly in his appearance, but extremely fat. When he was hoisted upon deck, his attendants carried him, chair and all, into the cabin, where they passed a jovial afternoon, and matters were arranged to the satisfaction of all parties. The king had seven puncheons of brandy, and other articles in the same proportion, for his dash; which was immediately put on shore.

"Next forenoon, our decks were crowded by the native merchants, bargaining for the cargo, which was soon arranged, and the half of the value paid in advance—a custom rendered necessary, from the traders not having the slaves in the town, but being obliged to go up the river to purchase them at the new moon. This being in a few days, we had to wait patiently. On the night before they set out, the sound of drums and horns never ceased, while parties with lighted torches were to be seen all along the beach, down to the water's edge, placing offerings of fowls, manilla, and dried fish, upon stakes, for the use of their jew-jew or god, that he might give them a prosperous voyage. The object of their worship is the guana, a creature having much the same appearance as the alligator, but smaller; and so completely domesticated that they go out and in to the huts at pleasure. Indeed, the natives build huts for them, where victuals are regularly placed every day.

"On the morning, they set off with their canoes loaded deep with goods, and well armed. Of the proceeds of this expedition we only got twenty slaves, with assurance that our cargo would be completed next trip, as they had made arrangements up the country for more. Of those we re-

ceived at this time, all had to get their hurts fomented and dressed, so much had they been injured, from the manner in which they had been secured by the traders; and it was some days before they were completely recovered. The gyves we put on did not gall the ankles, while they were secure; but their greatest inconvenience was that, on whatever occasion one had to move, the companion of his chain had to accompany him. During our tedious stay, it was my duty often to go to King Peppel's town for water, and there I recollect well, I met a handsome young female slave, who used to weep much, and importune me, in Negro English, to purchase and carry her to the West Indies with me. I was much surprised at this request, for the blacks are in general very averse to leave the country; and having made inquiry into her history, found it to be most cruel. I never was so sorry for a slave as I was for that young creature. She had been taken captive at the surprisal and plunder of her native town—her husband having escaped—and, being heavy with child, had been delivered on her way to the coast, where she and her infant were shipped for the West Indies. In the voyage out, the captain having taken a fancy to her person, kept her in his cabin, and did not sell her, but brought her again to Bonny, where he had come for a new cargo. It so happened that her husband had, like herself, been reduced to slavery, and was brought on board the very ship in which she was. Her feelings may more easily be conceived than described. Neither flattery nor punishment could make her comply with the captain's wishes; and he was so provoked, that he exchanged her for another slave with King Peppel, who had passed his word never to sell her to any one of the European traders. Her husband and child were meanwhile carried away, and she was left behind, to linger out a life of hopeless grief.

"Let me hasten to leave this horrible place. I could

make your heart sick by relating a hundredth part of what I was forced to witness. As to what happened in our own ship, I cannot avoid. After next new moon, we received the remainder of our cargo—four hundred slaves, male and female. The receiving them on board is the most heart-breaking and disagreeable part of the whole of a slaving voyage. When they come first on board, extreme terror is expressed in every feature; and their tears and groans while being put in irons few hearts can withstand, even though hardened by two or three voyages. This was my first and last; I cursed my folly a thousand times, and would have rejoiced to have been a beggar in Scotland rather than where I was. The men are chained by the ancles, two and two, then placed within their own barricade; so that husband and wife, sister and brother, may be in the same ship, and not know of it. When they come first on board, many of them refuse to eat or drink, rather choosing to die than live, and thinking we only wish them to feed, that they may become fat and fit for our eating—a prejudice many of them firmly believe in, and founded on the notion that the whites are men-eaters, and purchase them to carry to market like bullocks. While this feeling is in their mind, which is called the sulky fit, there is much trouble with them. The men remain silent and sullen, the women weep and tremble. Arguments, could we speak the different tongues, would be of no avail—the cat is the only remedy; and that is administered until they comply. The sight of it, or a few strokes in general, is sufficient for the females; but many of the males will stand out a long time, and, during the flogging, never utter a groan—snapping their fingers in the face of their tormenters, and crying, 'O Furrie! O Furrie!' (Never mind!) always a sure token of their despair and recklessness. We were very fortunate in getting our cargo so soon. We had two or three visits of

King Peppel along-side in his begging disguise—and wished no more. His custom was to visit each ship, meanly dressed, and in a whining voice, equivalent to a demand, beseech an alms—and he never begged in vain, for the royal beggar always got a handsome present; and, indeed, the ultimate success of the voyage required this, in consequence of his unlimited power over his subjects.

"Having got on board the lime-juice and other necessaries, all we required was the royal leave to depart; and at length his Majesty came on board, in as great state as at first—the same scene was acted over again—his parting-present was little inferior to the former, the difference being, that this was called a farewell present, and was returned by a man slave, and two elephant's teeth. The price of a prime male slave was, at this time, in Bonny, equal to an elephant's tooth of sixty-five pounds weight, or one thousand billets of red wood—nearly £10 of English money.

"Next day we set sail for St. Vincent, to our great joy, having lain here exactly six weeks and one day. Both the crew and the slaves began to grow very sickly. The duties of the crew were very severe, and, as disease prevailed, these became more and more disagreeable. As you seem interested, I will give you a faint, unconnected sketch of the run; but I would much rather pass it over, though the *Queen Charlotte* was remarked for her care and humanity to the slaves. To proceed:—

"Next morning, the negroes were forced upon deck, and the place where they had passed the night upon the bare boards, naked as they were born, was scrubbed with lime-juice, until every stain was removed. When upon deck, chained by the ankles, two and two, a strict watch behoved to be kept over them, to prevent them from throwing themselves overboard—a remedy for their sufferings they are keen to resort to for the first fortnight;

and, when the state of the weather would permit, the drum and fife being played, they were compelled to dance at least twice a day, to make their blood circulate, and promote their health. At these times, there was such a clanking of chains and stamping upon the decks, you would have thought they would have been beaten to pieces by them; and no wonder, when they were about two hundred lusty fellows, all in violent exercise at one time. At first the cat was forced to be employed; but they are very fond of the drum, and soon call of themselves for "jiggery-jigg," as they term it; will take the instruments themselves, beat their own time in their own way, and dance away in their own fashion.

'We had four or five different nations on board. Of one nation we had only twenty, and these we found were more than enough, from the trouble they gave us, forcing us to confine them by themselves, as all the other nations were afraid of them, and said they were men-eaters. These stood nearly six feet high, and stout in proportion; their teeth were ground to a point, and fitted into each other like a rat-trap; their nails were long and strong; they were sullen and untractable, and of consequence often flogged to make them eat, at which times their looks, as they snapped their fingers in your face, and growled 'O Furrie!' to one another, were horrible. In vain was all our care and attention to them, and every indulgence consistent with the safety of the ship. They had each two glasses of brandy, and sometimes three, per day; but some nations would not taste it, while others would drink as much as we would have given them. Those who did not take their allowance would keep it in their bekka, (cocoa-nut shell;) and when any of the crew did them any little service, they would wait an opportunity, and beckon as slily as possible, and give it to them. It was really beautiful to witness their kindness to each other of the same nation. If any of us gave one

of them a piece of salt beef—of which they were very fond, but of which they were allowed none, for fear of creating thirst—he that got it, though it were no larger than my finger, would pull it, fibre by fibre, and divide it equally, making, with scrupulous accuracy, his own proportion no larger than any of the others; while the man that gave it would get the grateful negro's day's allowance of liquor for it, when we went below to secure them for the night. Before they were turned below, they were carefully searched, lest they had concealed a nail, or any bit of iron, in their bekka, or little bag, by which they might have been enabled to undo their chains; and in the mornings, their irons and berths were as carefully examined. But what availed our care and attention, where sickness and death reigned triumphant? Never a day passed but one or two were thrown overboard, some days three; and, during our run to St. Vincent, of six weeks, we lost, out of a cargo of four hundred, one hundred and twenty. Two of the crew also died, and I myself was given up for death by the captain; but, contrary to his and my own expectation, I recovered rapidly. After I began to get convalescent, I had picked up a few of the poor creatures' words, and did my best, weak as I was, to relieve their wants, which were very urgent. The captain, from the very first, when he observed my dislike to the service I had engaged in, and the pity expressed in my looks, told me to take it easy, for that I would soon get accustomed to it. But I never could. Their complaints and piteous moans ceased not, night nor day. Although they were, in the night, confined below, and the crew had slung their hammocks on deck, under a spare sail, or anywhere they thought they would be most out of the sounds, still their moanings disturbed our sleep. Vain was the threat, 'Nappy becca—paum paum,' (Be quiet—I will beat you,) and the cat shaken over them. 'Ecrie ecrie cucoo' (I am sick plenty) was the reply.

'Biea de biea' (I want the doctor) sounded from every part; but 'Biea menie' (I want water) was the constant cry at all times—yet we were liberal in our allowance, and constantly supplying them with it.

"We gave them hot tea, when sick, made of pepper and boiled water, which they relished very much, crying often—'Biea de biea ocko menie—eerie eerie cucoo.' (I want the doctor and hot water—I am very sick.) This would often be repeated from twenty voices at once, in their soft, plaintive manner of speaking, as they gathered confidence from the time they had been on board. As long as they were able to move, we forced them to the deck; but we in general found them dead in the morning, when we went below to send them up. Often did the companion of the dead man's chain feign death, to be thrown overboard with him; but the cat was always applied to test him, and he was kept alive against his will. All this happened oftenest within the first fortnight or three weeks; for, by the fourth week, we had gained their confidence in a great measure, and their fears had worn off. The captain's custom was, when we found any one of them cheerful, and apparently easy in mind, to take off their chains, clothe them in a pair of trowsers and frock, and give them a charge over their fellows. Then they became proud, and stalked over the deck like admirals—and none more ready with the cat than they. Thus we gained upon them fast—the others envying those whom they saw dressed and trusted; so that, before we reach the end of the voyage, they were all, except some indomitable spirits, clothed, and walking the deck. Though still strictly watched, we allowed some of them to go aloft; and they soon became useful, more especially the boys, who before they left the vessel, were, some of them, no despicable seamen. When freed of their irons, and dressed, if they got the loan of a razor, or even a piece of broken bottle, they

would shave, and cut their hair in their own fashion, and become, if possible, more vain and proud of their appearance. In the middle of this heart-rending misery, at least to me, there was one ray of light that enlivened the gloom.

"We had on board of us a son of Bonnyface, the prime minister or chief favourite of King Peppel. He had been intrusted to Captain Waugh, as a great favour, to take him to England for his education, and we were to take him out again next voyage. Billy Bonnyface acted on board like a ministering angel. He was a sweet boy, and of great service to the captain, in soothing and giving confidence to the slaves, and attending the sick. He felt most acutely for their distress, and was constantly pleading with the captain for some little comfort or other for them—the tears streaming down his ebony face, in which the unsophisticated workings of his young mind were more moving than his words. All looked upon him as a friend, while by those whose language he spoke he was almost adored. All the crew, too, loved him; for to every one of them he had rendered some little service, by interceding for them with the captain, over whom his influence was great. A smarter or more active boy I never saw; he spoke English, for a negro, very well, and took great delight in teaching the black boy-slaves, who learned amazingly fast. I know not how it was, but little Billy loved me more than any other of the crew, and I can safely say there was no love lost. When he had a moment at leisure he was ever with me. You can judge by my looks if there was anything comely in them; yet the dear boy often hung round my neck and kissed me, while I held him to my bosom, and he called me Dad Robion."

Here the worthy captain paused, as if from extreme emotion. I felt as if I could have wept myself. He hastily resumed—

"I am an old fool. I shall go on, if I don't sicken you with my gossip."

"Proceed," I said—"in charity, proceed."

"I thank you," he replied. "Till now I had almost persuaded myself that no one cared for what I said, but Billy." And here he rung the bell, and the negro entered. "Billy," said he, "it wears late; bring an extra glass, and take your wonted seat."

"Tank you, massa," said the negro; "rather sit wit Mary. Picaninny no sleep yet."

"Well, Billy, as you please," he said, and resumed.

"On proceeding to the southward, we got becalmed eleven days in 2° east longitude. After a few days lying logging and motionless upon the water, despondency began to take possession of our minds; our water and provisions were wearing fast away, and the slaves dying fast, three and four being often thrown overboard at once. The most gloomy and fearful ideas began to occupy our minds—death stared us in the face, and we were utterly powerless. On the tenth day, the men began to gather together in parties, and whisper what they feared to speak aloud. They looked with an evil eye upon our chief mate, who was both feared and hated; to the crew he was tyrannical, but to the slaves he was cruel in the extreme; and little Billy avoided him as if he had been a fiend. He was, indeed, a hardened slaver of many years' standing; but the circumstance that would have sealed his doom was, that, on his last voyage to the coast, the ship he was in had been becalmed in the same latitude for twenty weeks; the captain, doctor, and all on board perished, except himself, two boys, and two of the slaves, out of forty-six Europeans and four hundred slaves, which they left the coast with. This was a subject he never wished to hear mentioned, and did all in his power to avoid being spoken to about; but he and I being on the

best of terms, in consequence of my having laid him under deep obligation to me at Bonny, he yielded to my request, and gave me the following details :—

"'We left the coast of Africa all well,' he said; 'in better health than common, and in high spirits. Nothing particular happened until we were about the place where we now are, when we had, first, variable winds for some days; then all at once it fell a dead calm, and our sails hung loose upon our masts. We felt no uneasiness at first, as such things are usual in these latitudes; and we only regretted the loss we were sustaining in our cargo, who had become very sickly, and were dying fast. Thus three weeks passed on, and despair began to steal upon us—our provisions and water began to threaten a short-coming, and it was now agreed to shorten our allowance of both, until a breeze sprung up. Our crew were listlessly loitering about the deck, and adding to the horrors of our situation by relating dismal stories which they had heard of vessels becalmed in these latitudes; and their spirits sank still lower and lower. Thus, week followed week, and no relief came—our despondency deepened—more than one-half of our slaves were already dead; and, by the fourteenth week, our water was almost spent, when it was debated by the crew whether we should not force the remainder of the slaves overboard. We were reduced to perfect skeletons by anxiety and want; and the slaves were much worse off than even we. When the result of the council was made known to the captain and mate, they gave a decided refusal, and armed themselves, threatening to shoot the first man who would again propose it; and it was again agreed to shorten yet further our scanty allowance of water. On the sixteenth week, the Europeans began to die as fast as the slaves, who were now reduced to one hundred and four, the crew to thirty-six. Our sufferings were terrible. Our thirst parched and shrivelled

up our throats. So listless were we, that the slaves were now allowed to be at large, and many of them leaped overboard, yelling fearfully as they splashed in the water, we not caring to prevent them, but rather wishing that they might all immolate themselves in the same way. We scarcely every slept when we lay down; our torments were so great that we would start up in a state of stupefaction, and wander over the deck like ghosts, until we sank down again, exhausted. The eyes of all were dim, some glaring bloodshot, red as raw beef. Several of the crew leaped overboard in a state of wild derangement; others would be walking or conversing in their usual way, and suddenly drop down dead, expiring without a groan. Thus did we linger out eighteen weeks, when the captain took to his cabin, and died through the night. Death's progress was fearful until the end of the nineteenth week, when all that remained alive out of such a number, were, of the Europeans, only myself and two boys, who kept up better than the men, and two young slaves. But by this time, there was no distinction between black and white: we lay, side by side, looking over the bulwarks of the vessel upon the glassy expanse of water; then to our sails that hung upon our masts like sere-cloths; then at each other—and our hearts felt as if they had ceased to beat. The heat was intolerable. We had only half a barrel of water on board, and such water as none ashore would have allowed to remain in their house; it was putrid, yet we were grieved at the smallness of the quantity; for in our present condition it was more precious than gold or diamonds, and was to us most sweet. There was still as little appearance of a wind springing up as on the first day of the calm. I was thus in possession of the vessel, without the means of working her, should a breeze spring up. The fear of this made me enlarge the allowance of water to the two slaves and boys, as on their lives my only chance of escape depended; for,

were they to die, I must, like all my fellows, also die in the calm, or become the sport of the winds and waves, when this appalling stillness in nature should cease to chain me to this fatal spot. How could I express what we felt when we first beheld the ripple upon the distant waters, as the long-looked for wind came gently along! We stretched out our arms, we wept like children, and the burning drops smarted upon our chopped and blistered faces—the breeze reached our decks, we felt as if our thirst had fled and we were bathed in pure water so balmy did it feel. The sails that had hung loose upon the yards for twenty weeks began to fill. The vessel moved through the water; I stood at the helm; and we soon left this fatal latitude far behind. I never left the deck until we arrived at Barbadoes. When overcome by sleep, one of the boys steered by the directions I gave, until I awoke again, and took the helm; and when the pilot came on board, as we neared the island, we had not one gill of water in the ship.'

"My heart sank within me," continued the Captain, "at this recital. We were in the same place, and had every prospect of sharing a similar fate. We were on short allowance of water; and it is the remembrance of these few fearful days that, as I walk alone, will at times even yet come over my mind, and, while their horror is upon me, vivid as it was at the time, if I see water recklessly wasted, I feel angry, until the illusion has fled, and then I bless God that I am in the middle of green fields, and not that watery waste that glowed like a furnace from the intense rays of the sun, and where nothing met the anxious gaze of the sufferer but an expanse of water and sky, both equally bright and unvaried, without cloud in the one or swell in the other, all still as death, save any noise in the vessel, which, if ever so small, was, at this time, fearfully acute to our ears. On the afternoon of the eleventh day, fortunately for the mate, and equally so for us all, a breeze

came rustling along the waters, our sails filled, and we glided along with joyful hearts. Great was the deliverance to us all, but greatest to that threatened victim; for, had we continued many days in the same situation, the ship's crew would have made a Jonah of him and thrown him overboard, as the man himself did not hesitate to say our bad fortune was solely on his account.

"On our arrival at St. Vincent, the slaves became very dull and low-spirited, especially when they saw from our decks the gangs of negroes at work in the fields, as we passed up along the shores of the islands. We were now all busy preparing them for the market,—that is, giving them frocks and trowsers, and making them clean; while the captain sent on shore for the black decoys, to raise their spirits and give them confidence. These decoys are black women, who are some of them free, and others slaves. They make a trade of it, and are well paid; the money, if they are free, being their own—if slaves, their masters receive it. They come on board gaily dressed, covered with tinsel and loaded with baubles, of which they have a great many to give away to the slaves. As soon as they come on board, under pretence of looking for relations or former friends, (the decoys are of all of the different nations that come from the coast,) they address each in their own tongue; tell them a number of cock-and-bull stories; point to themselves; profess all manner of joy to see them in this land of wealth and happiness, where they will soon be as gay and happy as they are; and, to show their riches and friendship for them, distribute the baubles among them before they leave the vessel. This has all the desired effect. The poor creatures immediately become full of spirits, and anxious to get on shore. The business of the voyage was now accomplished; for they were all sold by the agents on shore, and we knew no more of them. As soon as the ship was cleared of the slaves, the carpenters com-

menced to take down the barricades, and we to prepare for returning home, taking in water for ballast. I had no wish to return to Britain at this time, as berths were so difficult to be had when I left home, and I told Captain Waugh so; but he refused to let me leave the vessel, for he had not many good seamen in his crew; and I having signed the articles for the whole voyage, did not choose to forfeit my wages thus dearly won—so I at once made up my mind to return, and thought no more of it. We remained here for seven weeks before the captain got all his business settled, during which time I would have wearied very much, had it not been for little Billy, who was seldom from my side. As I went very little ashore, he preferred staying with me to going even with the captain, who was as well pleased at the choice, as his sole object was to be well spoken of by the boy to his father when they returned to the coast, that he might have the favour of old Bonnyface, who was King Peppel's chief minister, and had greater influence with him than any of his other favourites.

"Billy himself was one of the sweetest tempered and smartest boys of his age I ever saw, yet irascible to madness at the least affront from any one; for his nature had never been subject to the least training, and his passions were under no control. His countenance was the true index of his heart; and if any of the men intentionally gave him offence, his large black eyes would flash in an instant, he would spring at them like a tiger, to tear them with his teeth, and it would be some time before we could get him appeased; but, when the rage died away, he would think no more of it, nor would he complain to the captain, as he knew that the man would have been punished. However, it was only when some of the crew returned on board the worse of liquor, that they ever meddled with him; for otherwise there was not a man in the ship but would have as soon thought of leaping overboard, as giving him the slightest offence.

"Billy began to weary to get under way as much as myself; and when I asked him why he was so anxious to get to Britain, he replied, simply—

"'I much want to make book speak! You make book speak! Dad Robion, and all white man make book speak! Dat gives much power, dat make big man—so me wish to make book speak.'

"'I am happy,' I said, 'to hear you say so. Will you learn if I teach you, Billy, while we lie here? It will be so far good for you that you will not have to begin when we reach Bristol.'

"'You make my heart glad,' he replied. 'You teacha me—me all heart, me all attention, me never tink but what you say.' And he threw his arms round my neck.

"I was much affected, and seriously thought about what I had undertaken; for there were many difficulties to surmount—the greatest of which was the want of a proper book to begin with. There was not such a thing on board; so I got from the carpenter a smooth board, and formed the letters, telling him their names, and giving them to him to form after me. This he took the utmost delight in, and learned amazingly fast, for he was ever at his board; and, before we left the island, he knew words of one and two syllables in my book of navigation, the only one I had, save my pocket Bible, which he took great delight to hear me read—putting occasionally such puzzling questions to me as made me blush. When I told him it was the book of the white man's religion, he used to shake his head, and say—

"'Me no tink dat; for white man swear, white man steal, he drink over too much, he do what book say no; how dat?'

"I felt it quite impossible, from what he saw in our own crew, and what he had seen of the other white men at Bonny, to make him believe that white men had any rule

of conduct but their own inclinations and avarice. I sighed, and gave up the task; for what is instruction or precept to an ingenuous mind, without example; and our profession is belied by too many around, who acknowledge and claim the faith as theirs by word, and yet give it the lie by their actions.—At length we sailed, and reached King's Road on the 1st of January, 1789.

"I was so fortunate as get a berth, as mate, on board a West Indiaman, which was taking her cargo on board. Billy was, meanwhile, put to school, and I saw him every evening, at his request, and by Captain Waugh's leave. When he heard I was going to leave Bristol, and not to go back to the coast in the *Queen Charlotte* again, he wept, and importuned me, in the most moving terms, to go to Bonny with him, where he would cause his father to give me as many slaves as I pleased, and he would send his own people to get them for me. I was vexed to part with him, and did what I could to soothe him before my departure; but still I left him disconsolate. I once more left Bristol in the beginning of February, and had a fine run to Jamaica, where I left the vessel, with the consent of my captain, having made an exchange with a lad belonging to Bristol, who was mate in an American trader, and wished to get home, as he did not keep his health well in these climates; and, as he was an acquaintance of the captain's, all parties were agreeable. I now continued for several years in the carrying trade between the different islands and the continent of America, saved money very fast, purchased a share of a large brig, and sailed her successfully as captain. The war was now raging between Britain and the French Republic; but it did not affect my prosperity, for, being now a naturalized American, my ship and papers were a passport to me, and I sailed unmolested by the fleets and privateers of both nations. But my heart was British, and rejoiced in the superiority she held at sea, as if I had

been in the British service, and fighting for my country. For ten years everything had prospered with me. I thought myself rich—for I never was avaricious—and had some thoughts of returning to Edinburgh, when the failure of a mercantile house in Charlestown reduced me once more to a couple of thousand dollars. There was no use of fretting. I had all to do over again, and to it I set. 'I am yet not an old man, and, if I am spared (a few years are neither here nor there), I will be content with less this bout—so here goes.' I made over my claim upon the bankrupts to the other creditors for a small sloop that had belonged to them, and began the coasting trade again. I sold my sloop soon after, bought a brig, and took a trip in her to Kingston in Jamaica—when, what was my grief and surprise, to see, in the first lighter that came alongside the vessel, my old friend Billy! I could at first scarcely believe my eyes; I thought I knew the face, but could not call to my recollection where I had seen it, yet I felt I had known it by more than a casual meeting. I was at this time sitting at my cabin window; I saw that the person who had attracted my attention so much was a slave, and allowed the circumstance to pass out of my mind for the time, as I was busy with some papers, and had only been attracted by the sound of the oars as they passed under the stern of the vessel. On the second trip of the lighter I was on deck, and the same individual was there. I caught again his eye; and, as I gazed upon him, he uttered a cry of surprise, stretched forth his arms for a second, then shook his head sorrowfully, and sunk it upon his bosom, as if in despondency. That it was Billy, I had not now the most distant doubt; my heart leaped to embrace him, slave as he was. But how he had come into his present situation I could not conceive. I requested the black who had charge of the *Double Moses* (the name of the craft), to send Billy upon deck; and, as soon as he reached it, I held out my

hand to him. I believe my eyes were not dry; his were pouring a flood of tears upon my hand, which he kissed again and again. The crew and others looked on in amazement. The captain of a brig shaking hands with a black slave! Such an occurrence they had never witnessed; for my crew were native Americans, and looked upon negroes as an inferior race of men. He was now a stout young man, but rather thin and dejected; he was naked, save a pair of old trousers, and his shoulders and back bore the scars of many old and recent stripes. His former vivacity was now nowhere to be traced in his melancholy countenance—the independence of his former manner had all forsaken him—he was, in truth, a broken-in spirit and crushed slave. I resolved at once to purchase his liberty, if within my power, and told him so, when he fell at my feet, wept, and kissed my shoes before I could lift him up. He had not as yet opened his lips—his heart was too full, emotion shook his frame; and, to ease the feeling that seemed like to choke him, I went from the cabin to the state room, leaving him alone, while I sought out a jacket and light vest for him. I staid no longer than was necessary to give him time to recover. It was ever engraven upon my heart, that look of gratitude he gave me. His attempt to speak was still a vain effort. He was another man's slave and liable to punishment. I requested him to go away to his duty, and not tell any one what I meant to do, lest his master should ask an exorbitant sum, if he thought I was resolved to purchase at any price. So he went into the *Moses*, and pulled ashore; but kept his gaze constantly on me.

"As soon as my business would permit, I went on shore before sun-down to make inquiries about his purchase from his present master, and was pleased to find that he was the property of the merchant to whom my cargo was consigned. I told him at once frankly off hand that I wished to pur-

chase a slave of his, to whom I had taken a fancy. He replied, I was welcome to any of them at a fair valuation, and then called his overseer—for he himself cared little about his slaves, hardly knowing them by sight—and inquired if I knew his name. I told him the one I meant was called Billy, and described him. The overseer at once knew whom I meant, and said I would be welcome to him at cost, for he was a stubborn, sulky dog, and gave him much trouble, and, besides, was getting rather sickly ; so that, if I chose, I might have him for two hundred dollars. I at once agreed, and, after supper, went on board, happy that I had succeeded so well ; for Billy was to be handed over to me in the forenoon, as soon as the notary had made out the transfer. At length he came on board, joy beaming in every feature ; but so much had his noble spirit been crushed and broken, that he still felt his inferiority, and stood at an humble distance. He had been taught the severe lesson of what it was to be a slave. When I met him first, all he knew of the white man was the most humble submission to King Peppel and his father's humours. Their word was law to them at Bonny—how great the contrast to him here! He was insulted, despised, and tortured by the lash, by those very whites he had been taught, when a child, to look upon as scarcely his equals. Had he been even a prince in the interior, his bondage to the whites would not have been half so galling. I beckoned him to follow me to the cabin, where I got from him an account of his adventures since I had left him in Bristol.

"The captain left him at school on his next voyage to the coast, and did not take him out until the second year, when Billy could read English well, and had learned to cipher and write a tolerable hand. On being delivered safe to his father, the prime minister was proud of his accomplishments. Captain Waugh was most liberally re-

warded; King Peppel was glad to have one about him, who could make 'book speak.' Billy had every appearance of rising into great favour; but, poor fellow, the accomplishments his father was so proud of, proved the ruin of them both, and of all their family. In King Peppel's court there was as much ambition, intrigue, and rivalry, as in the most civilised in Europe; nor were the political plotters less scurpulous in the means they used to overturn the influence of a rival. They first began to hint, in an indirect manner, that Bonnyface had sent his son to the white man's land, to learn obi, and write 'feteche' or charms. The King, for some time, only laughed at them; but their endless inuendoes gradually began to poison his mind; and, while he became cool and more cool in his manner, the secret enemies had bribed the priests, or 'feteche' men, who also envied Billy his accomplishments, and they openly declared that it was not good to have white man's 'fetecches' in the black man's country. Old Bonnyface saw the storm gradually thicken around him, without the means of averting it; but this torturing state of uncertainty came to a close. The King, who had been ailing for some time, and applying to the surgeons of the slave ships, without much relief, was advised to try the physicians of his own country. These were the priests and feteche men; and this was the opportunity so long desired by the enemies of Billy's family. It was declared by all that there was a white man's 'feteche' upon him, and they could not remove it; but gave no opinions as to who it was that had put it on the King. It could be none of the white men in the river, for they all were his friends for trade; and then they paused, and shook their heads, received their presents, and retired. No one gave the least surmise to the King, who was the charmer; for this had been done months before. All that had been hinted of Bonnyface and Billy going to Britain rushed upon the

King's mind, aggravated by fear. Next day saw Bonny-face's head struck off, to break the 'feteche;' and the interesting Billy, and all the members of the family, were sold for slaves to the Europeans, their wealth confiscated to the King, and a part of it bestowed upon those who had wrought their ruin. I brought Billy home with me—and here ends my narrative, at least for this evening."

It now being rather late, I bade the Captain good night, and called again in the morning, after breakfast, when I found that the mother and babe were quite restored. Upon inquiry, we learned that the name of her husband was William Robertson. As the day was remarkably fine, I walked with the Captain to the reading-room, and found that the *Czar* had arrived at Leith the day before. We took the stage, and rode down, and soon had the pleasure to see the husband of the Captain's guest. When they met, the Captain seemed much affected at sight of him, and, in an agitated manner, inquired of what part of Scotland he was a native. He said he was born in the Grass-market of Edinburgh; and, upon further inquiry, we found that he was the Captain's cousin, the son of his uncle, who had married after his bankruptcy, and died, leaving his son destitute, who, from necessity, had gone to sea. To conclude, William Robertson came home to Morningside with us, a happy man. His wife and child resided with the Captain until his death, and that of Billy, who did not survive him many months. The cousin sailed his own vessel out of Greenock, and that was the last account I had from him.

## THE KATHERAN.

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he—
He played a spring and danced it roun
Beneath the gallows tree.

In the latter end of the summer of the year 1700, as a party, consisting of two ladies and two gentlemen, were returning to Banff, the place of their residence, from a distant excursion into the Highlands, they were overtaken by the dusk of evening in the Pass of Benmore, one of the wildest and most desolate spots in the north of Scotland. The ladies of this party were both young, and one of them, in particular, surpassingly beautiful. This lady's name was Ellen Martin, the daughter of a gentleman of great wealth, residing in the neighbourhood of the town above named. At the period we introduce her to the reader, Ellen had just completed her nineteenth year. She was rather under than above the average stature of her sex; but her fragile form was exquisitely moulded, and perfect in all its proportions. Her countenance was oval, glowing with health, and strikingly expressive of a disposition at once confiding, open, and affectionate. In truth, it was impossible to look on the youthful form of Ellen Martin, without feeling that you saw before you the very perfection of female loveliness. But, if there was any particular time or occasion when that beauty was seen to greater advantage than another, it might have been when, shaking aside with a gentle motion of her head the profusion of fair glossy ringlets with which it was adorned, she looked up with her large intelligent, but soft blue eye, and her small rosy lips apart, to catch more distinctly what conversation might be passing around

her. At such a moment, and in such an attitude as this, she seemed, indeed, more like one of those aerial beings that fancy delights to create, than a creature of mortal mould.

The female companion of Ellen Martin, on the occasion of which we have spoken and are about more fully to speak, was an intimate friend. One of the gentlemen was a near relation of Ellen's, the other the brother of her friend. The party, all of whom were mounted on little Highland ponies, having been overtaken by the dusk, began to feel rather uneasy at their situation, as they had yet fully fifteen miles of wild and hilly road to travel before they could reach any place of shelter. They had been perfectly aware, when they set out in the morning, of the distance they had to accomplish, and knew, also, that considerable expedition was required to enable them to complete with daylight the necessary journey ; but, full of health and spirits, and possessed of tastes capable of enabling them to enjoy the splendid scenery which had met them at every turn in their mountain path, they had loitered on the way till they found that they had expended all their time, and had yet accomplished little more than half their journey. In this dilemma, there was nothing for it but to push on—a simple enough corrective of their error, apparently, but one by no means to them of very easy adoption ; for they did not well know in what direction to proceed. Under these circumstances, one of the gentlemen called a halt of the party, to consider of what was best to be done, and to see if their united intelligence could make out where they were precisely, and help to the selection of the best route by which to prosecute their journey. To add to the unpleasantness of their situation, it began to rain heavily, and occasional peals of distant thunder growled amidst the hills.

The party were at this instant crowded together beneath

the shelter of a projecting rock, whither they had retired, to avoid the beating rain, and to hold the consultation to which we have above alluded. Unpleasant, however, as their situation was, they felt no great alarm The ladies, indeed, expressed some uneasiness occasionally; but it was quickly banished by the rattling glee of their male companions, who, elated with experiencing something like an adventure, were in high spirits, and endeavoured to communicate the same feeling to their fair friends. Ellen, who with all her gentleness of nature and delicacy of form, was of a highly romantic and enthusiastic disposition, was gazing pensively on the mighty masses of hill that rose around her on all sides, and anon down into the deep hollow of the pass, to whose highest point they had nearly attained, when she thought she perceived, through the obscurity of the twilight, a human figure ascending the pass in the direction of the party. She called the attention of her friends to the approaching object, which, in a few minutes was sufficiently near to exhibit the outline of a man of tall stature. He was advancing rapidly, with the light springy step peculiar to the Highlanders, and was traversing with apparent ease, ground, which, from its ruggedness and steepness, would have rendered the progress of one accustomed to such travelling, slow, laborious, and painful. The person now approaching seemed not to feel any such difficulties. He bounded lightly and rapidly over the ground, and in a few minutes was within a few yards of where they stood. On observing the party, he made towards them, and, doffing his bonnet with great politeness, and with the air of a prince, inquired, after apologising for his intrusion, whether they stood in need of any such assistance as one who knew the country well could afford them, and was ready to give.

The person who now stood before the party, and who made this friendly inquiry, was a young gentleman—at

least one whose appearance and manner bespoke him to be such. He was dressed in the full Highland costume of a person of consideration of the period to which our tale refers; but was fully more amply and carefully armed than was even then usual amongst his countrymen. In his belt he wore, besides the dirk, the common appendage, a couple of pistols, and, by his side, a broadsword of the most formidable dimensions. The figure of this person, who appeared to be about five-and-twenty years of age, was singularly handsome; his countenance mild and pleasing in its expression, yet strongly indicative of a bold and determined spirit—advantages which were finely set off by the picturesque dress in which he was arrayed, and which he wore with much dignity and grace, and by his erect and martial bearing. His whole figure, in short, was remarkably striking and prepossessing.

"I fear," said the stranger, addressing the party, and smiling as he spoke, "that you have miscalculated the height of our hills and the breadth of our muirs, that you are so late abroad."

"It is even so, sir," said one of the gentlemen; "we have been idling our time, and are now reaping the fruits of our thoughtlessness. We neither know well where we are, nor which way we ought to go. I suppose we must just make the most of the situation we are in for the night, although these rocks are but very indifferent covering."

"Why, I must say I would not feel much for your ease, gentlemen," said the stranger, "though you had to sleep on the heather for a night—I have done it a thousand times; but such quarters would ill suit these fair ladies, I fear."

"Yet they must be content to put up with it for this night at any rate," said one of the gentlemen; "for we can make no better of it."

"Perhaps *we* may make better of it," said the stranger.

"Something must be done to get these ladies under shelter. Let me see." And he mused for a moment, then added—"If I thought you would not be overly nice as to the elegance of your quarters, and if you would accompany me for a distance of a couple of miles or so, I think I could promise you, at least, the shelter of a roof, and such entertainment as our Highland huts afford."

The friendly offer of the stranger being gladly accepted by the party, who, one and all, declared they would be exceedingly thankful for any sort of quarters, the whole set forward under the conduct of their guide. Whether directed by choice or by chance, the latter, at starting, took Ellen's pony by the bridle, and was subsequently most assiduous in guiding the animal by the easiest and safest tracks. Nor did he once quit his hold for a moment during the whole of their march. This circumstance naturally placed Ellen and the stranger frequently by themselves; since, as leaders, they generally kept several yards in advance of their party—a circumstance which was not lost on the latter, who aimed at, and succeeded in making, perhaps a somewhat more than favourable impression on his fair companion, by his polished manners and lively and intelligent conversation.

We will not say that the effect of these qualfications was not heightened by the personal elegance and manly beauty of their possessor; neither will we say that the romantic and susceptible girl was not predisposed, by the same cause, to discover, in all he said, fully more, perhaps, than would have been apparent to a more indifferent listener. Be this as it may, it is certain that on this night, and on this particular occasion, Ellen Martin felt, and felt for the first time, the, to her new, strange, and delightful emotions of incipient love. What avails it to say that prudence should have forbidden this? The object of Ellen's sudden regard was a stranger, a total stranger. His name

even was not known, nor his rank in society otherwise than by conjecture; which, though favourable, was, of course, vague and uncertain. The circumstances, too, in which he had been met with, were such as to preclude all possibility of connecting any one single elucidatory fact with his history. But when, in a young and inexperienced mind, did love submit to be controlled by reason? and when did the young heart exhibit the faculty of resisting impressions at will? Certainly not in the case of Ellen Martin, who was, at this moment, placed precisely in those circumstances most eminently calculated for exciting, in susceptible bosoms, the one great and engrossing passion of the female heart.

After about an hour's travelling, the party, with their guide, arrived at a solitary house situated in a little glen or strath overhung with precipitous rocks, and through which wound a narrow and irregular road, that led in one direction over the hills that stretched far to the west, and in the other to the lower grounds, from which the neighbouring mountains rose. The house itself, although apparently a very old one, was of the better order of houses in the Highlands at that period. It was two stories in height, roofed with grey slate, and exhibited at wide intervals small dingy windows filled with the thick, wavy, and obscure glass of the time. Altogether it had the appearance of being the residence of a person of the rank of a small proprietor or tacksman. As the party approached the house, all was quiet within and around it. Not a light was seen, or movement heard. The hour was late, and the inmates had been long to rest. When within a short distance of the house, the conductor of the party, addressing the latter, said :—

"You will be so good as wait here, my friends, for a few minutes, until I prepare Mr. Chisholm for your reception. He is an old and intimate friend of mine, and will be glad, on my account, to show you every kindness in his power."

Having thus expressed himself, he left them, and, in a few moments after, returned to conduct them to the house, where they were received with great kindness by the landlord, a middle-aged man, of respectable appearance and mild manners. On entering, the party were ushered into a large room, where a servant girl was busily employed in kindling a fire of peats. These quickly bursting into flame, the travellers, in a very few minutes, found themselves enjoying the agreeable warmth of a blazing fire. But the kindness of their host was not limited to external comforts. With true Highland hospitality, the board was loaded with refreshments of various kinds; huge piles of oaten cake, with proportionable quantities of eggs, cheese, butter, cold salmon, and mutton ham, and, though last, not least, a little round, black, dumpy bottle of genuine mountain dew.

Delighted with their reception, pleased with each other, and urged into that exuberance of spirits which good cheer and comfortable quarters are so well qualified to inspire, especially when they present themselves so unexpectedly and opportunely as in the case of which we are speaking—the party soon began to get exceedingly merry; so much so, that they finally determined, as morning was now fast approaching, not to retire to bed at all, but to spend the few hours they intended remaining where they were. In this resolution they were the more readily confirmed by a certain proceeding of their late guide, in happy accordance with the mirthful feelings of the moment. This was his taking down from the wall a fiddle, which hung invitingly over the fire-place, and striking up some of the liveliest airs of his native land. The effect was irresistible; for he played with singular grace and skill, striking out the notes with a distinctness, precision, and rapidity, that gave the fullest effect possible to the merry strains which he poured on the ears of the captivated listeners. The party

were electrified. The gentlemen leapt to their feet, the table was removed bodily, with all its furniture, to one side of the apartment, and, in an instant after, the ladies also were on the floor. In another, the whole were wheeling through the mazes of a Highland reel. Nor did the merriment cease till the rising sun alarmed the revellers, by suddenly pouring his effulgence into the apartment. On this hint, the music and mirth both were instantly hushed; and the party, throwing aside the levity of manner of the preceding hours, began, with business looks, to prepare for their departure. Their host pressed them to stay breakfast; but, being anxious at once to get forward and to enjoy the morning ride, this invitation they declined. Their ponies, which had been in the meantime carefully attended to by their hospitable landlord, were brought to the door, and in a few minutes the whole party were mounted, and were about to start, when the circumstance of their late guide's again taking the reins of Ellen's pony in his hand, and apparently preparing to repeat the service of the previous night, for a moment arrested their march; all protesting that they would on no account permit him to put himself, by accompanying them, to the slightest further inconvenience on their account. With what sincerity Ellen joined in this protest—for she did join in it—we do not know; but it is certain that her opposition to his accompanying them did not appear at all so cordial as that of her companions.

The objections of the party, however, were politely, but peremptorily overruled by their guide, who reconciled them to his determination of escorting them, by remarking that, without his assistance, they would never find their way amongst the hills, and that, moreover, he was going at any rate several miles in the very direction in which their route lay. These assurances, particularly the latter, left no room for farther debate, and the party proceeded on their way; the guide and Ellen, as before, leading the march. But,

as it was now daylight when any little chance distance that might occur between the parties was of less consequence and less attended to, they were always much farther in advance than on the preceding night; indeed, frequently so far as to be for a considerable time out of sight of their companions. In this proceeding, Ellen had, of course, no share whatever. It was solely the result of a certain little course of management on the part of her escort, who availed himself of every opportunity of widening the distance between his fair companion and the other members of the party. It was on one of these occasions, when the lovers—for we may now without hesitation call them such—had turned the shoulder of a hill which Ellen's guide knew, calculating from the distance which the party were behind, would conceal them from the view of the latter for a considerable time—it was on this occasion, we say, that he suddenly seized Ellen by the hand, and, ere she was aware, hurried it to his lips; but, as quickly resigning it—

"Ellen," he said, looking up to her with an expression of tenderness and contrition that instantly disarmed the gentle girl of the resentment into which the freedom he had just taken had for an instant betrayed her—"forgive me—will you forgive me? That cursed impetuosity of temper—the failing of my race, Ellen—has hurried me into an impropriety. I have offended you. I see it—but do forgive me."

"On condition that you do not attempt to repeat it," said Ellen, smilling, though there was evidently much agitation in her manner.

"I promise," replied the offender. A pause ensued, during which neither spoke. At length, Ellen's guide, who seemed to have been struggling with some powerful and oppressive motion, suddenly, but gently arrested the progress of the pony on which she rode, and said, in a voice altered in tone by intensity of feeling—

"Ellen, I wish to God we had never met!"

"Why should you entertain such a wish?" inquired Ellen, timidly, and blushing as she spoke.

"Because then I had not been broken-hearted," said her companion, with a sigh. "I had still retained my peace of mind—my step should still have been light on the heather, and my thoughts free and careless as the wind upon the mountains."

"You speak in enigmas," replied Ellen, blushing deeper than before. "I do not understand you," she added, but with a manner that contradicted the assertion.

"Then I will be more plain with you, Ellen," replied her companion:—"I love you, I love you, fair girl, to distraction."

This declaration was too unequivocal to be evaded; yet poor Ellen, though her heart responded to the sentiment, knew not what reply to make in words. Her agitation was extreme—so great as almost to impede her respiration.

"We are strangers, sir," she at length said—"total strangers; and such language as this should, if spoken at all, be spoken only when it is warranted by a longer and more intimate acquaintance. Ours is literally but of yesterday, although you have certainly crowded into that short space as much kindness as it would possibly admit of; and I and my friends are grateful for it—sincerely grateful. Still we are but strangers."

"Strangers, Ellen!" replied her lover, getting more and more energetic and impassioned as he spoke—"no, we are not strangers—at least you are none to me. From the first instant I saw you, you were no longer a stranger. From that instant, you had a home in this heart, and on that instant you stood before me confessed one of the loveliest and gentlest of your sex. What more would an age of acquaintance have discovered? What more is there need to learn."

At this instant, a shout from one of the gentlemen of the party interrupted the enthusiastic speaker, and put an end, for the time, to the conversation of the lovers. The call, however, that had been made on their attention by their friend, being merely intended to intimate that they had them in view, Ellen's guide soon found another opportunity of renewing his suit. We do not, however, think it necessary that we should renew a description of it—tedious as the conversation of all lovers is to third parties. We shall only say, then, that, long ere Ellen and her handsome and accomplished guide parted, the affections of the simple, confiding girl were unalterably fixed. Whether they were happily disposed of, the sequel will show.

After having crossed "muirs and mountains mony o'," Ellen and her lover arrived on the ridge of a hill, which commanded a distinct, though distant view of the town of Banff, when the latter suddenly stopped, and—"Ellen," he said, "here we must part. I can proceed no farther with you; but it will go hard with me if I do not see you very soon again."

"Nay," said Ellen, "since you have come so far with us, you must go yet a little farther. You must go on to the town, and afford us an opportunity of acknowledging the obligations under which we lie to you. My father will be most happy to see you."

The expression of a sudden pang crossed the fine countenance of the stranger. His lip quivered, and his brow contracted into momentary gloom; but, with what was apparently a strong effort, he subdued the feeling, whatever it was, which had caused this indication of mental pain, and replied, after a brief pause—

"No, Ellen, it cannot be. I must not—I—I dare not enter Banff with the light of day."

"Dare not!" said Ellen, in surprise. "Why dare you not? What or whom have you to fear?"

"Fear?" replied her companion, somewhat distractedly —"I fear the face of no single man, weapon to weapon; but, were I to enter Banff, I might not have such fair play. There are some persons there with whom I am at feud; and my life would be in danger from them. This was what I meant, when I said that I dared not enter Banff. Yet it is not that I would not *dare* either," he added, raising himself proudly to his full height, and laying an emphasis expressive of defiance on the word; "but it would be foolhardy—absurdly imprudent. I cannot—I may not go further with you, Ellen."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the approach of the rest of the party, who at this moment rode up to Ellen and her companion. These, on being told that the latter was now about to leave them, repeated, and in nearly similar words, the invitation which Ellen had already given him; but it was not in similar words to those he had used on that occasion, he answered them. To them he merely said that pressing business called him in another direction, and repeated that, where they now were, they must part. He however, promised, though with the manner of one who has no fixed intention of fulfilling that promise, that the first time he went to Banff, if circumstances would permit, he would certainly pay them a visit.

"Since you will not go with us, then," said one of the gentlemen, "at least inform us to whom we are indebted for the extraordinary kindness which you have shewn us. Favour us with your name if you please."

"My name, sir!" said the late guide, smiling. "Why, that is a matter of no consequence. You will know me when and wherever you may see me again, I dare say, and that is enough." Saying this, he shook hands with each of the party—with Ellen this ceremony was accompanied by a look and pressure of peculiar intelligence—and bounded away with the same light and elastic step with which he

had approached them on the preceding night, and was soon lost to view.

It would not be easy for us to say precisely what were the opinions entertained by Ellen's party, of the warm-hearted but mysterious person who had just left them. These were various, vague, and indefinite. That he was a person far above the ordinary classes of the country, was evident from his dress, his manner, and his accomplishments. The first was that of a gentleman, the latter were those of a man of education and talent. These obvious proofs of his rank there was no gainsaying; nor would they admit of any difference of opinion. But it had not escaped those who were now engaged in discussing the subject of the stranger's probable history, that, during the whole time they had been together, neither his name, profession, nor place of residence, had ever transpired. They had not been at any time alluded to, even in the slightest or most distant manner. It was only now, however, that the oddness of this circumstance seemed to strike the members of the party with the full force of its peculiar character. Each now asked the other in surprise, if they had not ascertained any of the particulars just mentioned from the stranger; and all declared that they had not. More extraordinary still, as it now appeared on reflection, his name had never once been mentioned by the person in whose house they had passed the previous evening. In this investigation, the circumstance of the stranger's having declined to give his name at parting was not of course forgotten. The affair altogether was a singular one—a conclusion at which all arrived; but it was one also, which their discussion could throw no light on; and this being sensibly felt by all, the subject was gradually dropped.

To what extent the doubts and indefinite suspicions with which the mystery associated with their late guide had inspired the various members of the party, were shared by

Ellen, we do not know; but we suspect that, in her bosom, they were mingled with feelings that had the effect of giving them a totally different character from what they assumed in the minds of her companions. In her case, these doubts or suspicions were wholly unassociated with any idea unfavourable to the character of him whose conduct excited them. She saw, indeed, that there was a degree of concealment on the part of that person; but she never, for a moment, dreamt that it proceeded from any reasons involving anything disgraceful. In the fondness of her love, she conceived it impossible that a being of so kind and generous a heart, of so prepossessing appearance and manners, and of so noble a form, could ever have been guilty of anything which should subject him to the debasing feelings of either shame or fear. She felt there was mystery, but she was satisfied it was not the mystery of crime; and, under this conviction, she continued to cherish the love which had thus so suddenly sprung up in her own guiltless and guileless bosom. The party, in the meantime, were rapidly approaching the place of their respective residences, and a very short time after saw that consummation attained.

If we now allow somewhere about the space of a month to elapse, and if we then look, in the dusk of a certain evening, into a certain retired green lane or avenue, at the distance of somewhat less than a quarter of a mile from the residence of Ellen Martin's father, in the vicinity of the town of Banff, and which, being on the property of the latter, was secluded from all intrusion, we shall then and there find two persons walking together, in earnest and secret conversation. If we approach them nearer, we shall discover that they are lovers; for there is the gentle accent and the endearing concourse of fond hearts. They are Ellen Martin and her mysterious lover; and this is the fifth or sixth night on which they have so met since

they parted at the time and in the manner before described.

"But why this mystery, James?"—for this much of his name had she obtained—Ellen might have been overheard, by an eavesdropper, saying to her lover on this occasion, as she leant on his arm, and gazed fondly in his face. "Why all this mystery?—why is it that you come and go only under the shade of night?—and why is it that you shun the face of man with such sedulous anxiety?—and why, above all, are you always so carefully armed? Oh, do confide in me, James, and tell me all. Relieve my mind. Tell me the reason of these things. You wrong me by this mystery; for it implies a suspicion of my sincerity—it implies that you think me unworthy of being trusted."

"Doubt your sincerity, Ellen!—think you unworthy of being trusted!" said the person whom she addressed, emphatically but tenderly. "Sooner would I doubt the return of yonder moon—sooner would I doubt that the sea would flow again after it has ebbed—than doubt your sincerity, love; but I cannot, I will not, I dare not give you the information you ask; for, with that information I would loose you for ever; and what, think you, would induce me to inflict such misery as that on myself? Be content, Ellen, in the meantime at least, with an assurance of my love—yes, unworthy as I am," he exclaimed, with increased fervour, "of a love as strong, as sincere, as pure as ever existed in a human bosom."

"I never doubted it, James—I never doubted it," said Ellen, bursting into tears, and leaning her head fondly on the shoulder of her lover; "and I will not press you further for that information which you seem so reluctant to give. I will, in the meantime, as you say, confide in your fidelity, and leave the rest to some future and happier hour.

"Happier hour, Ellen!" said her companion, with a bitter

smile. "Alas? there is no happier hour than this in store for me. But it is happiness enough." And he chanted in a low, but mellifluous voice—

"There's glory for the brave, Ellen,
And honour for the true;
There's woman's love for both, Ellen—
Such love's I find in you.

"There's wealth into the Indies, Ellen,
There's riches in the sea—
But I would not give for these, Ellen,
One little hour with thee."

"A poor bargain, James," said Ellen, smiling and blushing at the same time. "You are a fair poet, but very indifferent chapman, if that be a specimen of your bargain-making."

"It may be so, Ellen," replied her companion, also smiling; "yet I am willing to abide by the terms."

At this instant, a rustling noise was heard amongst the bushes close by where the lovers stood. The mysterious stranger started, hurriedly freed his sword hilt from the folds of his plaids, muttering, as he did so—

"Ha! have they dogged me? They shall rue it. By heaven, they shall rue it!—I shall not be taken cheaply!" And he half unsheathed his weapon, as he stood listening for a repetition of the sounds which had alarmed him; but they were not repeated; and the uneasiness of the lovers gradually subsiding, they resumed their conversation. At the expiry of another "little hour," the lovers parted, and parted to meet no more—a misfortune which they but little anticipated; for a solemn promise was given by both to meet in the same place and at the same hour on that day se'ennight.

As it may lead to the gratification of some curiosity on the part of the reader regarding the mysterious lover of

Ellen Martin, we shall follow his footsteps after leaving her in the manner just described. We may as well, first, however, make the reader aware that these visits of the person alluded to were by no means of very easy accomplishment. They cost him a journey, over mountain and moor, of upwards of a score of miles; but he was light of foot, nimble as one of the deer of his native mountains, and such a feat to him was not one which he deemed much to boast of. If we follow him, then, as proposed, on the night in question, we shall find him performing such a journey as we have alluded to, and finally arriving at a deep but narrow glen, or ravine, far up amongst the hills, and accessible only at one extremity, and even here of such difficult entrance that none but those intimately acquainted with it could effect it. This knowledge, however, the person whom we are now accompanying possessed. He ascended the natural barrier by which the ravine was closed with a sure but rapid step; when, having gained its utmost height, and ere he descended on the opposite side, he extricated a small bone or ivory whistle from the folds of his plaid, and drew from it a short, low, but piercing sound. Had he omitted this precaution, his life would have been the forfeit; for, concealed amongst the copsewood, at a little height inside of the glen, lay a sentinel with loaded rifle, whose duty it was instantly to fire on any one entering without such intimation previously given of his being a friend. Having sounded the whistle, the person of whom we were speaking, without waiting for any response—for none was required—plunged down into the ravine below, bounding from crag to crag like a hunted chamois, and trusting for security on each airy footing to a handful of the lichen which grew from the precipitous wall of rock down which he was descending.

Having gained the bottom of the ravine, he pushed on towards its centre, when he again ascended, and now

made for a clump of copsewood, which grew at a considerable height on the side of the glen. This gained, he dashed the branches aside, and, in the next instant, plunged into a cavern whose dark mouth they concealed. Accompanying him thus far also, we shall find the companion of our travels reaching a large and lofty chamber, in the centre of which burnt a huge fire of peats, built on a circular piece of rude masonry, and around which are seated eight or ten men. Here and there may be seen resting against the walls of the chamber the large steel basket-hilts of broadswords, and, in different corners, accumulations of plaids and bonnets. Another object also will strike us. This is several immense sides of beef, and several carcases of mutton, hung up in various parts of the cave, all ready for the operations of the cook. Neither the character of the place, nor of those by whom it is occupied, can be mistaken. It is a den of Highland katherans.

The reception by the latter of the person whom we have just intruded upon them, was very markedly cold and distant; and it was rendered more so by the contrast between his manner to them on his entrance, and theirs to him. The former was cheerful and conciliatory, the latter sullen and repulsive.

"The eagle's eyry is not now in the cleft of the rock," said one. "It is in the barn-yard."

"Ay, the deer has left the mountain, and gone to herd with the swine," said another.

"I understand you, friends," replied the intruder. "You do not approve of these wanderings of mine. You think I am taming down into some such animal as a Lowland shopkeeper or Wanshaw weaver—and perhaps it is so, in some measure; but I cannot help it. I acknowledge that the whole energies of my nature—all the feelings of my heart—have undergone a total change, both in character

and direction. I certainly am not the man I was. I feel it, and therefore feel that I am no longer fit to be your leader."

"Macpherson," said one of the men, "you guess part of our feelings towards you just now, but not all. There is in these feelings at least as much of fear for your safety in these excursions of yours, as displeasure with your neglect of us and our common interest. You know that we love you, Macpherson, for yours is the generous and open hand —yours is the hand that was never raised in anger against the unoffending or the helpless, and never closed in hard-heartedness against the needy."

"No, thank God," replied the person thus eulogized— "much evil as I have done, the shedding of blood is no part of it. Personal injury I have never yet done to any man, nor to any man shall I ever do it, unless in self-defence. Neither can the poor ever say they asked from me in vain. But, my friends," went on the speaker, "this is but a melancholy strain. Come, let us have something of a livelier spirit, and let me see if I cannot introduce it." Having said this he went to a corner of the cavern, where lay a large wooden chest. This he opened, and drew out a violin. It was a favourite instrument, and well could the person who now held it, employ it. Seating himself on an elevated bench of stone, which had been erected by the inmates of the cavern against the wall, he commenced playing some cheerful airs, and with such effect that he very soon dissipated the angry feelings of his auditors, and brought expressions of benevolence and good will into these rugged countenances, that had been but a little before lowering with gloom and discontent. The skilful minstrel, perceiving the effect of his music—an effect, indeed, which former experience had taught him to anticipate with perfect certainty—now changed his strain, and launched into a series of the most thrilling and pathetic

airs, all of which he played with exquisite taste and expression.

Had any one at this moment watched the fierce and weather-beaten faces of those who were listening in breathless silence to the delightful tones of his violin, they might have marked in the eye of more than one, an unbidden tear, and on all an expression of deep sympathy with the spirit of the music. At length the musician ceased; but it was some time before the spell which he had thrown over his auditors was broken. For some seconds, there was not a word or a movement amongst them—all continuing to remain in the fixed and pensive attitude in which the melancholy strains had bound them.

Having brought his performances to a close, the musician, half in earnest and half playfully, hugged his violin, as if exulting in its power, to his bosom, embraced it as if it had been a living thing, and hurried with it to the chest from which he had originally taken it, and there again carefully deposited it. His reception on now returning to the party whom he had just been entertaining with his music, was very different from what it had been on his first entrance. Their better and kindlier feelings had been touched by his strains—a sympathetic chord in each bosom had been struck; and the effects were sufficiently visible in the altered manner of those who were thus affected towards him whose skill had produced the change. The transition of the feelings of admiration was natural and easy from the music to the musician; and looks and words of kindness and forgiveness now greeted the mountain Orpheus, who took his place among the rest, to share in some refreshment which had been, in the meantime, in preparation.

Leaving the katherans employed in discussing this repast, which consisted simply of roasted kid, we will proceed to divulge the whole of that secret regarding the chief

personage of our tale, which we have hitherto so carefully kept. This personage, then, was no other than the celebrated freebooter, Macpherson. This man, as is well known, was the illegitimate son of a gentleman of family and property in Inverness-shire, by a woman of the gipsy race. He was brought up at his father's house; but, on the death of the latter, was claimed and carried away by his mother; when, joining the wandering tribe to which she belonged, he acquired their habits, and finally became the character which we have represented him—namely, a leader of a band of katherans. He was a person of singular talents and accomplishments, of uncommonly handsome form and feature, of great strength, yet, though of a lawless profession, of kind and compassionate disposition. Such was the hero of our tale—such the lover of Ellen Martin, although little did that poor girl yet know how unhappily her affections had been placed.

Having nothing whatever to do with the proceedings of Macpherson and his band during the interval between the parting of the former with Ellen and the period of the proposed meeting—these having but little interest in themselves, and being in no way connected with our story—we will at once pass this space of time, and bring up our narrative to the day on which Macpherson was again to set out for the trysting place. His motive and feelings in this matter he confided only to one friend out of all his comrades. This man, whose name was Eneas Chisholm, was the son of the person at whose house the reader will recollect the party, of which Ellen was one, was so hospitably entertained on the night they had lost their way on the mountains. It was he, also, who had eulogized the generosity and clemency of Macpherson, as we a short while since recorded. He was a young man, and, both in manner and disposition, much like Macpherson himself. He possessed all his warmth and sincerity of heart, katheran as

he was; but was greatly his inferior in talents and in personal appearance. Taking an opportunity when none else were near, Macpherson informed this person that he intended on that evening repeating his visit to Banff.

"It is madness, Macpherson," said Eneas—"downright madness. You surely do not calculate on the risk you run, in these desperate adventures of yours, of falling into the hands of the sheriff. You are well known, and it is next to a miracle that you escape."

"No danger, Eneas, none at all man," replied Macpherson, in the confidence of his own prowess, and not a little perhaps, in that of his agility. "I have done more daring things in my day on far less inducement; and," he added, proudly, "give me fair play, Eneas, my sword in my hand, and not any six men in Banff will take James Macpherson alive."

"But they may take him dead, though, Macpherson," said Eneas, "and you can hardly call that escaping, I think."

> "Cheer up, cheer up my bonny, bonny May!
> Oh, why that look of sorrow?
> He's wise that enjoys the passing hour—
> He's a fool that thinks of the morrow!"

exclaimed Macpherson, slapping his friend jocosely on the shoulder. "Why man, Ellen Martin I must see, and Ellen Martin I will see, let the risk be what it may—ay, although there were a halter dangling on every tree between this and Banff, and every noose were gaping for me."

"Then, at least, allow three or four of us to accompany you, Macpherson, in case of accidents," said Eneas.

"No, no; not one, Eneas," replied Macpherson—"no life shall be perilled in this cause but my own. If I am unfortunate, I shall be so alone. I alone must pay the penalty of my own rashness and imprudence. I would not put a dog's life in jeopardy, let alone yours, in such a mat-

ter as this. But I'll tell you what," he added: "I'll exact a promise from you, Eneas."

"What is that?" said the latter.

"It is," replied Macpherson, "that, if I am taken, and taken alive, you will do what you can to have my violin conveyed to me to whatever place of confinement I may be carried."

"It is an odd fancy," said Chisholm, smiling; "but I promise you it shall be done, since you desire it."

"I do," replied Macpherson. And here the conversation between him and his friend terminated; and, shortly after, the former having carefully armed himself, set out alone on his perilous journey. The sun, when he left the glen, had already sank far down into the west; while his slanting rays were yet beating with full fervour and intensity on those sides of the rocks and hills that looked towards the setting luminary, their opposite fronts were involved in a rapidly deepening shade, and the valleys were beginning to be darkened with a premature twilight. But Macpherson had calculated his time and distance accurately. Three hours of such walking as his would bring him to the goal he aimed at, and then the gloaming would be on the verge of darkness. And it was so, in each and all of these particulars. He arrived at the trysting-place precisely at the time and in the circumstances he desired. On reaching the appointed spot, Ellen was not yet there. Neither did he expect she should; but he felt assured that she would very soon appear. Under this conviction, he seated himself on a small green bank, closely surrounded with thick shrubbery or copsewood, and, thus situated, awaited her arrival.

Leaving Macpherson thus disposed of for a time, we shall advert to a circumstance of which he was but little aware, although it was one which deeply, fatally concerned him. He had been seen and recognised. The per-

sons—for there were two—who made the discovery, dogged the ill-starred freebooter to the place of his appointment with Ellen, where, seeing him stop, one of them hurried away to communicate the important intelligence to the sheriff, while the other remained to keep watch on the motions of the unsuspecting outlaw. On the former's being introduced to the presence of the dreaded officer jnst named—

"What would you give, Mr. Sheriff," he said, "to know where Macpherson the freebooter is at this moment?"

"Why, not much, man," replied the sheriff, "unless he were so situated as to render it probable that I could take him. I have known where he was myself a hundred times, but dared not touch him."

"But I mean as you say—I mean in a situation where he may be easily taken," rejoined the man. "I know where he is at this instant, and all alone too—not one with him."

"You do!" exclaimed the Sheriff, with great animation for the capture of Macpherson had been long one of the most anxious wishes of his heart. "Where, where is he, man?" he added, impatiently.

"Let me have half-a-dozen well-armed men with me," replied his informant, "and for fifty merks I will make him your prisoner."

"Done!" said the Sheriff, exultingly—"fifty merks shall be yours, of well and truly told money, the instant you put Macpherson into my power; and, instead of half-a-dozen men, you shall have a whole dozen, and I myself will accompany you. Is he far distant?"

"Not exceeding a mile."

"So much the better—so much the better," said the Sheriff, rubbing his hands with glee. "If we take him, a worthier deed has not been done in Scotland this many

a day. It were worth a thousand merks a-year to the shire of Banff alone."

In less than fifteen minutes after this conversation had passed, a sudden bustle might have been seen about the old town-house of Banff. This was occasioned by a number of men, amongst whom was the sheriff, hurriedly ransacking the town armoury for such warlike weapons as it contained, each choosing and arming himself with the best he could find. This choice, however, was neither very extensive nor varied; the stock, chiefly consisting of some rusty Lochaber axes, and a few equally rusty halberds and broadswords, kept for the array of the civic guard on great occasions—sometimes of love and sometimes of war.

The party having all now armed themselves, were drawn up in front of the town-house, when the sheriff, placing himself at their head, gave the word to march; and the whole moved off under the guidance of the person whose intelligence had been the cause of their turning out. After they had proceeded about a mile, the latter called a halt of the party, and taking the sheriff two or three paces in advance, pointed out to him the spot in which he had left Macpherson, and where, as they were informed by the man who had remained to watch his motions, and who at this moment came up to them, he still was.

A consultation was now held as to the best mode of proceeding to the capture of the dreaded outlaw—a feat by no means considered either a safe or an easy one by those by whom it was now contemplated; for all were aware of his prowess, and of the desperate courage for which he was distinguished.

Macpherson, in the meantime, wholly unconscious of his danger, was still quietly seated on the small green bank where we left him. Ellen had not yet appeared, and he

was listlessly employed in drawing figures on the ground with the point of his scabbard, when he was suddenly startled by a similar noise amongst the bushes with that which had alarmed him on a former occasion. He sprung to his feet, drew a pistol from his belt with his left hand, and his sword from its sheath with his right, and, thus prepared, awaited the result of the motion, which he now saw as well as heard. The rustling increased, the foliage rapidly opened in a line approaching him, and, in an instant afterwards, his friend, Eneas Chisholm, stood before the astonished freebooter.

"Eneas!" he exclaimed, under breath, but in a tone of great surprise.

"Hush, hush!" said Eneas, seizing his friend by the arm—"not a word. In five minutes you will be surrounded. You have been recognised and dogged. There are a dozen of the sheriff's men within five hundred yards of you, planning your capture. Let us be off—off instantly, Macpherson," he continued, urging the latter onwards. "If we can gain the town, we may escape. I know a place of concealment there."

"Nay, but Ellen—Ellen, Eneas!" said Macpherson, hanging backwards, and resisting the efforts of his friend to drag him away.

"Fool, fool, man!" said Eneas, passionately, and still urging him forcibly along. "An instant's delay, and both you and I are in the hands of our deadliest enemies."

"We can fight, Eneas."

"Ten times a fool!" exclaimed the latter, with increasing anger. "Fight a dozen men, all as well armed as ourselves!—and observe, besides," he added, "your obstinacy will sacrifice me as well as yourself."

"Ay, there you have me," replied Macpherson. "That shall not be—God forbid!" And he hurried along with his friend.

At this instant, a shrill whistle was heard from the copsewood.

"They are on us," exclaimed Eneas, as, with one bound, he cleared a five feet wall that intervened between them and the highway that led to the town of Banff.

He was instantly followed by Macpherson, who, having thrown his sword over before him, cleared the impediment with yet greater ease. Having gained the road, the two outlaws hurried towards the town. No pursuer had yet appeared; and it seemed as if they had already effected their escape. In this fancied security, the fugitives slackened their pace, that they might not incur the risk which would attach to a suspicious haste. During all this time, not a word more than we have recorded had passed between them. They had pursued their way in silence, and were thus just entering the town, when Macpherson suddenly felt himself seized by both arms from behind. Their route had been marked, and they were intercepted.

Macpherson, exerting his great personal strength, with one powerful effort freed himself from the grasp of his assailants—for there were two—flinging both, at the same instant, to the ground by a sudden and violent extension of his arms. Having thus set himself at liberty, he hastily drew his sword, and stood upon the defensive. His friend, Eneas, also drew, when they found themselves opposed to at least a dozen—the two who had sprung on Macpherson, being now joined by their comrades. Undaunted by the number of their enemies, and aware of what would be their fate if taken, the intrepid outlaws determined on a desperate resistance. Macpherson, with his other accomplishments, was an admirable swordsman, and he felt that he had not much to fear from the unskilled rabble to whom he was opposed, so long as he could keep them from closing with him—and in this conviction he coolly awaited their onset.

It was some minutes before this took place; for their opponents, awed by their fierce and determined bearing, hung back. At length, however, they seemed to be gathering courage by degrees, as they came gradually moving on, till they were within two or three paces of Macpherson and his comrade, when two of the boldest of them made a sudden rush on the former, with the view of rendering his weapon useless, by closing on him; but the attempt was fatal to the assailants. With a fierce shout of defiance and determination, Macpherson struck down the foremost, with a blow that split his head to the chin, while his comrade despatched the other by running him through the body. Both the outlaws, on striking, leapt back a pace or two, so as to maintain the necessary distance between them and their enemies, who were still pressing on. But, panic-stricken by this, the first results of the encounter, they now paused, and entered into a hasty consultation, which ended in the resolution of their attacking simultaneously, and in a body, and thus, by mere force, bearing down their opponents. Acting on this resolution, the whole rushed forward, with loud shouts, when a desperate conflict took place. For a long time, both Macpherson and his friend not only warded off the numerous cuts and thrusts that were made at them, but brought down several of their assailants, one after the other; and the issue of the contest seemed very doubtful, great as the odds were against them.

In the meantime, however, Macpherson, though fighting desperately, was compelled to yield ground, to avoid being closed upon and surrounded; for the pressure of the crowd was now greatly increased by an accession of town's people, who, having heard the din of the conflict, hastened to the scene to witness it, and to assist in the capture of the freebooters. Finding himself in danger of being assailed from behind, he rushed to one side of the street, and,

placing his back to the wall of a house, flourished his sword, and defied the whole host of enemies who pressed upon him; and out of that whole host there was not one who would come within reach of the courageous outlaw thus desperately at bay. For fully a quarter of an hour he kept a circle of several yards clear around him, and having in this interval gained breath, it seemed extremely doubtful that he should be captured at all; for it was possible that, by a desperate effort, he might cut his way through his assailants and effect his escape. In truth, seeing the timidity of his enemies from the circumstance of none of them daring to approach him, some such proceeding he now actually contemplated. But a counter measure was at this moment in operation, which prevented its execution, and placed the outlaw in the hands of his enemies.

A person from the crowd entered the house, against the wall of which Macpherson was standing, by a back door, and proceeded to an apartment, one of whose windows was immediately above and within a few feet of him. Opening this window cautiously, this person having previously provided himself with a large heavy Scotch blanket, threw it, as broadly extended as possible, over the outlaw, thus blinding him and disabling him from using his weapon. The crowd beneath—marking the proceeding which Macpherson, from his position, could not—watching the moment when the blanket descended, rushed in upon him, threw him to the ground, disarmed, and secured him; his friend, Eneas, who had been early separated from him in the melée, and who had not attracted, during any period of the conflict, so much of the attention of their common enemies, having contrived, previous to this, to effect his escape.

On being captured, he was bound, conveyed to prison, and a strong guard placed over him. On the following day, an elderly woman, dressed in the antique garb of her

country—the Highlands—was seen walking up and down in front of the jail in which Macpherson was confined, and ever and anon casting a look of anxious inquiry towards the building. A nearer view of this person discovered that her eyes were red with weeping; but all her tears had been already shed, and the first excess of grief had passed away; for both her look and manner, though still expressive of deep sorrow, were grave, staid, and composed—nay, even stern. Occasionally, however, she might be seen, as she stood gazing on the prison-house of the unfortunate outlaw, rocking to and fro with that slow and silent motion so expressive of the intensity of mental suffering. Occasionally, too, a low murmuring of heart-rending anguish might be heard issuing from her thin parched lips. But she held communion with no one, and seemed heedless of the passers by. At length she crossed the street, and having knocked at the massive and well-studded outer-door of the prison, inquired if she might see the principal jailor He was brought to her. On his appearing—

"The deer of the mountain," said his strange visiter, "is in the toils of the hunter. Oh! black and dismal day that that proud and gallant spirit that was wont to roam so wild and so free should be cooped up within the four stone walls of a loathsome dungeon—that those swift and manly limbs should be fettered with iron—and that the sword should be denied to that strong arm which was once so ready to defend the defenceless!"

"What mean ye, honest woman?" said the jailor, who was a good deal puzzled to discover a meaning in this address.

"What mean I?' exclaimed his visitor, sternly. Do not I mean that the brave is the captive of the coward—that the strong has fallen before the weak—that the daring and fearless has been circumvented by the timid and the cunning? Do not I mean this?—and is it not true? Is

not James Macpherson a prisoner within these walls, and are not you his keeper?"

"It is so," replied the astonished functionary.

"I know it," said his visitor. "Then will you convey this to him?" she said, bringing out a violin from beneath her plaid.

The jailor looked in amazement, first at the woman, and then at the instrument.

"What!" he at length said, "take a fiddle to a man who's going to be hanged! That is ridiculous."

"It is his wish," said the former, briefly. "The wish of a dying man. Will you convey it to him?"

"Oh, if it be his wish, he shall surely have it," said the jailor; "but it is the oddest wish I ever heard."

"You *will* convey it to him, then?" replied the stranger, with the same sententious brevity as before.

"I will," was the rejoinder.

The woman curtsied and withdrew in the same cold, stern, and formal manner she had maintained throughout the interview. On her departure, the jailor proceeded to Macpherson's dungeon with the extraordinary commission with which he had been charged. The latter, on seeing the well-known instrument, snatched it eagerly and delightedly from its bearer, exclaiming—"Welcome, welcome! thou dear companion of better days! thou solacer of many a heavy care! thou delight of many a happy hour! Faithful Enea!" And with the wild, strange, and romantic recklessness of his nature, he immediately began to play in the sweetest tones imaginable—tones which seemed to have acquired additional pathos from the circumstances of the performer—some of the melancholy airs of his native land; and from that hour till the hour of the minstrel's doom, these strains were almost constantly heard pouring through the small grated window of his dungeon. But they were soon to cease for ever. Macpherson was, in a few days

afterwards, brought to trial, and condemned to be hanged at the cross of Banff.

On the day on which he suffered the last penalty of the law, he requested the jailor to send some one with his violin to him to the place of execution. The request was complied with. The instrument was put into his hands as he stood at the foot of the gallows, when he played over the melancholy air known by the name of "Macpherson's Lament." It had been composed by himself while in prison. On concluding the pathetic strain, he grasped his violin by the neck, dashed it to pieces against the gallows, and flung the fragments into the grave prepared for himself at the foot of the gibbet. In a few minutes after, that grave was occupied by all that remained of Macpherson the Freebooter.

We have now, we conceive, to gratify the reader's curiosity on one point only—and this is accomplished by adverting to Ellen Martin. The unhappy girl ultimately ascertained, though not till long after his execution, who her mysterious lover was; but neither the history of her attachment to him, nor her intimacy with him, was ever known to any one besides his friend Eneas; for to none other had he ever named her. Nor, during his confinement, or at any period after his capture, had he ever made the slightest allusion to her. This, indeed, from motives of delicacy towards her, he had studiously and carefully avoided.

On Ellen, the effect of a grief—for the discovery of her lover's real character had not been able to efface the impressions which his handsome person and gentle manners had made upon her young heart—the effect, we say, of a grief which she durst not avow, was that of inspiring a settled melancholy, and determining her on a life of celibacy. In the grave of Macpherson was buried the object of her first love, and she never knew another.

## THE MONKS OF DRYBURGH.

THESE worthies were celebrated for "guid kail;" but they were no less remarkable for their ingenuity in directing the wealth of their neighbours and dependents into their own coffers. In common with others of their profession, they assailed the deathbeds of the wealthy, and persuaded the dying sinner that he had no chance of heaven unless he came handsomely down for their holy brotherhood before his departure.

It was for such a purpose as this that two of the brethren of Dryburgh set out, one day, in great haste, to visit the old Laird of Meldrum, who, they had been informed, was suddenly brought to the point of death; and the information was but too true—for the old man had not only arrived at the point of death, but had passed it, and that ere they came. In other words, the laird was dead when they arrived, and their services, of course, no longer required.

This was a dreadful disappointment to the holy men; for they had reckoned on making an excellent thing of the job, as the laird had been long in their eye, and had been carefully trained up for the *finale* of a handsome bequest.

It was with long faces, therefore, and woful looks, that the monks returned to their monastery, and reported the unlucky accident of the laird's having slipped away before they had had time to make anything of him in his last moments. The disappointment was felt by all to be a grievous one, for the laird had been confidently reckoned upon as sure game. While in this state of mortification, a bright idea occurred to one of the brethren, and he mentioned it to the rest, by whom it was highly approved of.

This idea was to conceal the laird's death for a time;

to remove his body out of the way, and to procure some one to occupy his bed, and pass for the laird in a dying state: then to procure a notary and witnesses, having previously instructed the laird's representative how to conduct himself—that is, to bequeath all his property to the monastery: this done, the living man to be secretly conveyed away, the dead one restored to his place again, and his death publicly announced.

This ingenious scheme of the monk met with universal approbation, and it was determined that it should be instantly acted upon.

Fortunately, so far, for the monks, there was a poor man, a small farmer in the neighbourhood, of the name of Thomas Dickson, who bore a singularly strong personal resemblance to the deceased—a circumstance which at once pointed him out as the fittest person to act the required part. This person was, accordingly, immediately waited upon, the matter explained to him, and a handsome gratuity offered him for his services.

"A bargain be't," said Thomas, when the terms were proposed to him; "never ye fear me. If I dinna mak a guid job o't, blame me. I kent the laird weel, and can come as near him in speech as I'm said to do in person."

The monks, satisfied with Thomas's assurances of fidelity, proceeded with their design; and, when everything was prepared—the laird's body removed out of the way, Thomas extended on his bed, and the curtains closely drawn round him—they introduced the notary, to take down the old man's testament (having previously intimated to the former that he was required by the latter for that purpose), and four witnesses to attest the facts that were about to be exhibited. Everything being in readiness—the lawyer with pen in hand, and the witnesses in the attitude of profound attention—one of the monks intimated to the dying man that he might now proceed to dictate his will

"Very well," replied the latter, in a feeble, tremulous tone. "Hear me, then, good folks a'. I bequeath to honest Tammas Dickson, wham I hae lang respeckit for his worth, and pitied for his straits, the hail o' my movable guids and lyin' money. Put doon that." And down *that* accordingly went. But if the house had flown into the air with them, or the ghosts of their great-grandfathers had appeared before them, the monks could not have expressed more amazement or consternation than they did, at finding themselves thus so fairly outwitted by the superior genius of the canny farmer. They dared not, however, breathe a word of remonstrance, nor take the smallest notice of the trick that was about being played them; for their own character was at stake in the transaction, and the least intimation of their design on the laird's property would have exposed them to public infamy—and this Thomas well knew. It was in vain, therefore, that they edged round towards the bed—concealing, however, their movements from those present—and squeezed and pinched the dying laird. He was not to be so driven from his purpose. On he went, bequeathing first one thing and then another to his honest friend Thomas Dickson, till Thomas was fairly put in possession of everything the laird had worth bequeathing. Some trifles, indeed, he had the prudence and discretion to bestow upon the monks of Dryburgh; but trifles they were, truly, when compared to the valuable legacy he left to himself.

When the dying laird had disposed of everything he had, the scene closed. The discomfited monks returned to their monastery—the notary and the witnesses departed—and Thomas Dickson, in due time, stepped into a comfortable living, and defied the monks of Dryburgh, on the peril of their good name, even to dare to hint how he had come by it.

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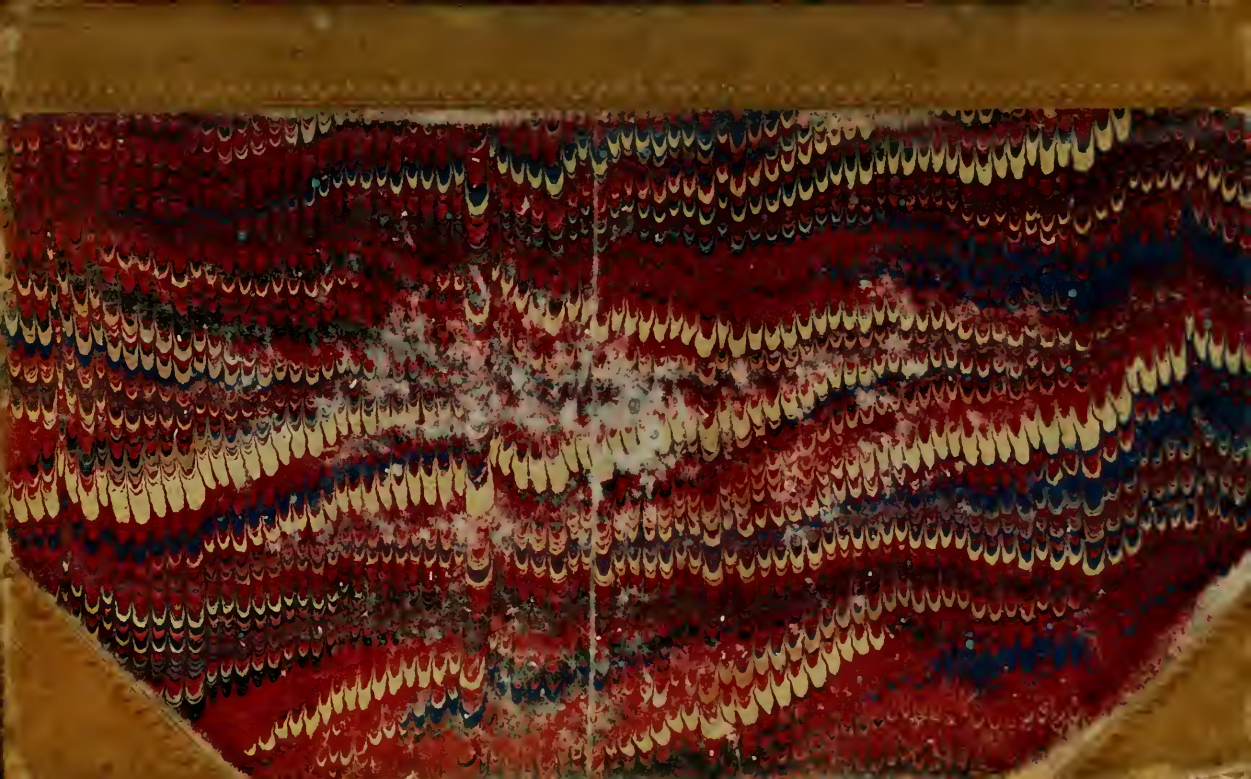
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